MR. SPEAKER: Will you stop bad habits? Will you kindly take your seats?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Defiance of the Chair is gross abuse of the House. It is a gross breach of privilege. We are tolerating too much sitting in the Chair. You are making mockery of everything. All sections of the House are guilty. Please introspect. Where are we taking this country to? A serious incident has happened and everybody has condemned it. Cannot that be raised in the House in a proper manner? I am obliged to most of the leaders. They have spoken with a great sense of responsibility.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do not make commentaries on Speaker's observations. You should learn all these things. Take the matter seriously. Every party has its own viewpoint. If they want to do it according to rules, they are entitled to do it. But I am only saying to raise the basic issue that is before the House. Many leaders have raised it. Kumari Mamata Banerjee and Shri Prabhunath Singh have raised it. Prof. Malhotra has also raised it. He has controlled himself very well today. I compliment him for it.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura): Sir, they have not listened to us. *...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: All right, leave it.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am trying to settle the issue. I am appealing to all of you not to come to the well of the House.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: You donot say so. This is not to be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If I do not allow you to speak, then you can say something. Please do not come to the well of the House.

Please do not come to the well of the House. We are almost at the fag end of the 14th Lok Sabha. You know it. You only say that I am to go this time. Do not force me to take any unpleasant step, which I do not want to take. Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan also shares my agony. I am very much thankful. The hon. Minister also responded. It was for him to respond. I did not compel him to respond. What he said is that according to law action will be taken.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pradhan you are so much annoyed today. It does not behove you. You occupy bench number two and you make maximum noise, It does not behove you. Kiran ji, whatever you do is not good. It does not behove you.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Tell me why matters are raised in the House. The matters are raised in the House because the country would know. The Government is there. The parties should know each other's view point. Otherwise, it should be decided on the streets. It is being raised in the House because there may be a solution found.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Therefore, let us show a little respect to the House, to the democratic way of functioning. I am thankful to everybody for the cooperation.

Now, we are going to discuss the Railway Budget. Almost every hon. Member is interested in speaking. It is an important debate.

13.37 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE: DISAPPROVAL OF RAILWAYS (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE
RAILWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2008
RAILWAY BUDGET (2008-2009)— GENERAL DISCUSSION
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT (RAILWAYS), 2008-2009
DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 2007-2008
AND DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 2005-2006—*Contd.*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House will now take up combined discussion of item Nos. 13 to 18 in the List of Business.

Shri Brahmananda Panda.

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*Not recorded.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA (Jagatsinghpur): I want to speak in my mother tongue - Oriya.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Panda, are you speaking in Oriya?

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: I am speaking in my own mother tongue.

MR. SPEAKER: Of course, you are entitled to speak in your mother tongue. Please give a notice so that its translation could be heard by other Members.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: I have already given a notice.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Panda, you speak a little later.

[Translation]

*SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Sir, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister to the railway related problems of Rajasthan.

1. I request to run a daily train from Jaipur to Darbhanga and extension of Jirarat Express, Marudhar Express and Jansadharan Express trains upto Darbhanga.

2. Necessary action is yet to be taken to make Jaipur railway station a world class station. As per my information, consultant for Jaipur station has not been appointed yet and suggestions for the station can be known only after that.

3. Similarly, hon. Railway Minister had announced in July, 2007 to make the Ajmer railway station a world class station too but the Railway Minister has not taken a decision in this regard so far. There is a need to take an early action in this regard.

4. Food Plaza has been opened only at Jaipur railway station under North Western Railway. There is need to take an early action for opening Food Plazas at the other major stations like Ajmer, Abu Road, Udaipur, Bhilwara, Jodhpur etc.

5. Budget Hotels were announced in the last budget but no action has been taken so far to build budget hotels in Rajasthan where Jaipur, Udaipur, Ajmer, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer and Lalgarh in Bikaner are the stations selected for the purpose. It is very important to build the budget hotels in view of the rising number of tourists visiting Rajasthan.

6. There is a large number of commuters on some sections near Jaipur. Therefore, there is a need of DMU like trains on these sections like Ajmer-Phulera-Jaipur and Jaipur-Alwar section where passenger load can be increased by increasing the frequency.

7. Dedicated Freight Corridor: West- This corridor is to come up from Rewari station to Palampur under North Western Railway and is likely to result in industrial development of Rajasthan. Therefore, it should be started soon.

8. Logistics Parks will have important contribution in the industrial development of Rajasthan. I request the hon. Minister to make their early selection in the interest of Rajasthan.

9. I also request the hon. Railway Minister to grant approval for construction of new railway line from Anupgarh to Ramgarh which will be important for Rajasthan from the security point of view.

10. The gauge conversion work is going on at a fast pace in North Western Railway. I request the hon. Railway Minister to introduce trains as soon as the gauge conversion work is over so that the people of Rajasthan can be benefited.

11. Currently, the following sections are lying closed due to gauge conversion work:

    Rewari-Sadhulpur-Hissar since 1 January, 2008;

    Rewari-Ringes-Phulera since 1 December, 2007 and

    Jaipur-Phulera-Ajmer line is proposed to be closed from 23 March for doubling.

12. The hon'ble Railway Minister has not given approval in this budget for gauge conversion of two sections in Rajasthan, namely – Ratangarh-Sardar Shahar, 43 kms, and Marwar-Mawali-Badi Sadri, 230 kms. I request that approval should be granted for these two sections so that all the railway lines in Rajasthan could be converted from metre gauge to broad gauge.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

I hope that the hon. Railway Minister will pay attention to the said main problems of my State and will get them solved soon.

*SHRI RAKESH SINGH (Jabalpur): Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. The ruling party has unsuccessfully tried to win accolades through the Railway Budget. No matter how many announcements hon. Railway Minsiter may make regarding Railways development but the bitter truth is that he can not give guarantee of safe journey even today. It is the tradition of our country that we wish the passengers a happy and safe journey before the start of the journey and this is also the main slogan of the Railways. But, unfortunately, nobody is in a position to allow one's mother, sister, wife or daughter to travel alone today. It is very unfortunate that we cannot guarantee safe travel within our own country even after purchasing a valid ticket. I would like to draw your attention particularly to the fact that incidents of loot, robbery, assault and rape are occurring regularly with the passengers. Criminal incidents on trains in my region and in the West-Central Railway have been rising constantly. Unless concrete measures are taken soon to check it, all the announcement and schemes about development of the Railways would prove futile and the slogan of safe journey would create fear among the passengers rather than relief.

Sir, I want to say that the development of Railways is closely related to the development of the country because the economic, industrial and agricultural development is dependent to a large extent, on the development and the schemes of the Railways. The developmental schemes of the Indian Railways are prepared under the national five year plans and now when the 11th five year plan has started, I have no hesitation to say that the developmental policies of the Railways and its main objectives under the 10th five year plan have not been achieved so far. I, therefore, want to draw your attention to the main objectives of the 10th five year plan.

Sir, one of them is more investment for early completion of the approved railway projects and the other is upgradation of technology to increase the average speed of the trains. With deep regret, I want to tell the hon. Railway Minister that neither his promise to make maximum investment for completion of the railway projects approved in the 10th Five year plan has been kept nor the announcements made by him in the last Railway budget have been implemented so far. Sir, the future of the Railways as well as that of the people depends on the internal strength and the policies of the Railways and any kind of political discrimination should not be there in determination of these policies rather backwardness of an area should be the basis for completion of developmental schemes of an area. But, unfortunately, political discrimination is an obstacle in the development of the backward areas.

Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways towards Mahakaushal, the most backward region in Madhya Pradesh. Jabalpur is both the largest town and the headquarters of the Railway Zone. The hon. Minister has recently visited the place. I would like to tell you that in the beginning Jabalpur was seriously considered to be selected as capital at the time of formation of Madhya Pradesh. But, it lost the chance to have this status as the railway facilities in the city were not adequate. The most important project for development of the entire Mahakaushal region is the Jabalpur-Gondiya Gauge conversion project which had been sanctioned by the Atal Behari Vajpayee government. The cost of this 285 km long project of great importance was Rs. 511.86 crore for which Rs. 109.32 crore had been sanctioned initially. Thereafter, the UPA government came into power and hon. Laluji became the Railway Minister. Subsequently, Rs. 38.06 crore were released in 2004-05, Rs. 25 crore in 2005-06, Rs. 57.40 crore in 2006-07 and Rs. 60.00 crore in 2007-08.

Sir, the media in Jabalpur and I had described the facts regarding the backwardness of Jabalpur and the Mahakaushal region to Shri Laluji during his recent visit to Jabalpur. We had also informed him of the reasons as to why Jabalpur-Gondiya broadgauge was important for Jabalpur and this region.

The Railway Minister had acknowledged all those facts and made a public announcement that the project would be completed by 2010. This had generated hope not only in Jabalpur but in the entire Mahakaushal region that the developing city of Jabalpur would get rid of its backward tag. Unfortunately, the Minister failed to keep his word in the present railway budget. Sir, he has allocated a meagre sum of Rs. 60 crore for this project for the year 2008-09 in the railway budget. If we go by his announcement, this project ought to be completed by the next year, that is 2009-10 and when all expenditures are taken into account, a total of Rs. 162 crore needs to

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Rakesh Singh]

be provided for the project during this period. I would like to know as to whether the hon. Minister will provide the entire amount in lump sum in 2009-10 and if at all, he does manage to do so, whether it would be possible to complete the project within a short period of one year. The funds allocated during the current year are meant for the loop line between Balaghat and Katangi which is merely 49 km long. The large scale and cost intensive works on the main line between Balaghat and Jabalpur which include construction of bridges, installation of signals, construction of stations, laying of railway lines are yet to be undertaken. I would like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister, through you, towards a major discrepancy, which is, that when this project was started its cost was estimated at Rs. 511.86 crore. Time over-run automatically leads to cost over-run. The revised estimate about the cost of the project as per last year's budget was Rs. 524.88 crore and the remaining amount was Rs. 240 crore whereas the revised estimated cost of project during the current year's budget has been shown as merely Rs. 511.86 crore and the remaining amount to complete the project has been projected as Rs. 147 crore. However, if we add the amounts released so far then it comes to Rs. 349.46 crore including the Rs. 60 crore released during the current year. As per this calculation if we take the total project cost to be Rs. 511.86 crore, even then the remaining amount comes to Rs. 162.40 crore. This proves that the Railway Ministry is intentionally creating a false impression by quoting incorrect figures. This is an injustice to the Mahakaushal region because this would lead to the work of gauge conversion in this region being shifted to the very last in the series of such projects whereas this project should have been given top priority since this is the project which is likely to yield the highest profits for the railways amongst the gauge coversion projects. Sir, the day this project is completed, the distance from South to North would be reduced by 274 km. With the completion of this work, the required wagon turn-down needed for development of railways would also improve. At present, one wagon traverses a distance of about 250 km in 24 hours and the wagon turn-down in the entire country is 5-6 days. When 274 km of reduction in distance takes place after completion of this project, this turn-down would also come down to 4 to 5 days.

Reduction of wagon turn-down on this route would lead to saving of crores of rupees for the railways and also lead to a direct annual increase of Rs. 300 crore in income. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards another important facet of this project. The work of gauge coversion from Gondiya to Ballarshah has been completed in 1999 and the railways has spent Rs. 400 crore thereon but even after so much expenditure, optimum use of this route is not being made. Objections in this regard had also been raised in the report of the Railway Convention Committee. The biggest reason for this failure is the non-completion of gauge conversion work between Jabalpur and Gondiya. Gondiya to Ballarshah route will not be used optimally until this work is completed. At present, Itarsi to Ballarshah route is a very busy route.

Sir, completion of this work is also very important in view of the second major objective of the tenth five year plan that is, increasing the average speed of the trains, because Itarsi-Ballarshah route is an extremely busy route. The utilization rate of this route is 160 percent which is too high and leads to slowing down of trains and increase in wagon turn down time. Completion of Jabalpur-Gondiya broad gauge would lessen the pressure on Itarsi-Ballarshah route and it would become possible to run new trains on this route.

Sir, there could be no more profitable rail route for the railways once gauge conversion on this route is carried-out. Merely Rs. 60 crore have been allocated during the current year for completion of this venture which would prove to be highly profitable in future. This allocation is totally inadequate and belie the Minister's announcements. Hence, the incorrect figures projected in the railway budget should be corrected and the people should be informed about the actual remaining funds for the project. It is expected of the Railway Minister that he would publicly announce the actual remaining funds for the project and retain the faith of the people.

I would like to tell the hon. Minister that the people of Jabalpur and Mahakaushal region feel deeply about this project. Recently, a Halla-Bol rally had been organized in Jabalpur against the railways in the course of which I had undertaken a journey of 100 km from Katni to Jabalpur on foot. At the end of this rally 25 to 30 thousand men and women had gathered in front of West-Central Railway headquarters in Jabalpur to express their anger at the negligence shown towards this region. I am sure that the echo of the anger expressed by the people of Jabalpur reached the ears of the railway ministry mandarins too which resulted in the announcement of a Jabalpur to Mumbai Garib Rath and a passenger train from Katni to Itarsi in lieu of our demand for a new train from Jabalpur to Mumbai and a DMU from Katni to

Narsinghpur in the current railway budget. But this is inadequate. I would like to draw your attention towards some important issues regarding railway facilities which are necessary for the development of this region.

Sir, in order to expedite as well as complete the gauge-conversion work immediately Western Central Railway, which has its headquarters in Jabalpur should be made the executive agency in place of the other executive agency—South East Central Railway which has its headquarters in Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh.

The weekly train running between Jabalpur and Jammu for 'darshan' of Mata Vaishno Devi should run at least four days a week.

Lakhs of Sikh people live in Jabalpur and surrounding areas, hence a direct train from Jabalpur to Amristar should be introduced.

Sir, both Jabalpur and Katni are very important stations in my Parliamentary constituency and I have been demanding for last several years that Jabalpur and Katni stations should be given ISO 9001 Certificate.

A local train should be introduced between Bheraghat and Khamaria in Jabalpur, which has a population of twenty lakh and the rail track required for this purpose is already there.

I would like to tell you that the world famous tourist spot Bheraghat is situated in Jabalpur and today tourism is the key factor for development of the railways. Hence Bheraghat station should be developed from tourism point of view and all amenities should be provided there.

Sir, in order to reduce the crowd at the main station in Jabalpur a decision should be taken immediately to develop Kachhpura station at the other end of the city as a station having all the facilities for the passengers and Madanmahal station on the lines of Habibganj (Bhopal) station.

In view of the increasing number of passengers Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti train from Jabalpur to Delhi should be made a daily train.

A large number of Bangla speaking people live in Jabalpur, hence a direct train from Jabalpur to Kolkata should be introduced. Another train should be introduced from Jabalpur to Siwan via Allabhad-Chhapra so as to benefit the large number of people of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh living in Jabalpur.

Chitrakoot Express presently running from Jabalpur to Lucknow should be extended up to Kathgodam (Uttaranchal) via Bareilly.

I.I.I.T. and several technical institutes have been set up in Jabalpur. Similarly, SEZ of I.T. in Jabalpur has also been declared. Hence, there is an urgent need to introduce a train between Jabalpur and Bangalore immediately. Hon. Minister, Sir, in continuance of my logical demand the Western Central Railway Zonal office has been submitting this proposal to the board for the last two years which has not been approved till date. Hence, it should be approved.

As there is no direct train to Tiruvananthapuram, the Malayali people living in Jabalpur have to go to Itarsi or Nagpur one day before to take other trains for onward journey which is incovenient. Hence a direct train should be introduced from Jabalpur to Tiruvananthapuram and the weekly train no. 6360 Rajendra Nagar-Ernakulam should be made a daily train to Tiruvananthapuram.

The headquarters of Western Central Railway Zone is in Jabalpur. Jabalpur is the largest city in Eastern Madhya Pradesh. So, I request hon. Minister of Railways to set up an office of Railway Recruitment Board at Jabalpur also.

The rail track is being electrified countrywide, but itarsi-Jabalpur-Katni rail route is still neglected even after continuous demand. Budget provisions should be made for starting electrification of this route urgently.

A large number of Muslims live in Jabalpur for whom Ajmer is the centre of faith. Hence Jabalpur-Jaipur Express train should be extended upto Ajmer.

Sir, the facilities for passengers at Panagar station in Jabalpur township are negligible. The stoppage of Mahakaushal, Revanchal, Shaktipunj, Amarkantak, Janata Express and Jabalpur-Rewa link city trains should be provided at this station.

A computerized reservation centre should be set up at Panagar station. I would like to tell Hon. Minister of Railways, through you, that Sihora is an important place in Jabalpur district where it has been announced to set up new industrial area and SEZ. Hence, in view of heavy

[Shri Rakesh Singh]

traffic load an underbridge or overbridge should be constructed at Khitaula level crossing.

U.T.S. system has not still been made available even after sanctioning computerized reservation centre at Sihora station. Hence, it should be provided urgently.

Gondavana Express, running between Delhi and Jabalpur, Amarkantak Express and Mahangagri Express should be provided a stoppage at Sihora station.

There is 123 acres of Railway land adjacent to Sihora station which should be used for setting up of factories for maintenance and repair of coaches of the trains originating from Jabalpur and for printing of stationery for commercial, electronic and other departments.

Sir, Katni railway station is an important junction in the country. Hence, this railway station should be developed as per the norms of ISO: 9001 Certification. There is ample scope for development of marble industry in this region. Hence, a train should be introduced from Katni to Udaipur via Kota, Chittorgarh and the train running between Jabalpur and Nagpur should be extended upto Katni.

There is an urgent need to introduce an Intercity Express between Katni and Bilaspur. The stoppage of Indore-Bilaspur train should be provided at Madhav Nagar station in Katni.

Sir, the stoppage of Bhopal-Bilaspur passenger train at Patoha and Kota-Jabalpur Express at Reethi should be provided. Similarly, stoppage of Chirmiri train, Kurla-Varanasi train and Kamayani Express should be provided at Salaiya station.

Sir, Salimnabad station should be developed as a station having all the passengers' amenities. The stoppage of Jabalpur-Rewa intercity, Veena-Bhopal and Jabalpur-Lucknow Chitrakoot Express should be provided at this station.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, the distance of Damoh from Jabalpur is 110 Kilometres and as there is no direct rail link between the two places, the people have to travel 210 kilometres for going to Damoh via Katni. If a rail route is provided between Jabalpur and Damoh, all the trains will have to cover 100 kilometres less distance. The survey of this route has been completed.

Hence this project should be approved. The work of laying down rail track between Damoh and Kundalpur should be started immediately. I would like to thank Hon. Minister of Railways on behalf of the people of Jabalpur that he has declared to introduce a new train between Jabalpur and Mumbai and a new passenger train between Katni and Itarsi in place of the D.M.U. running between Katni and Narsinghpur for which I have been demanding for the last three years. But I have a complaint that I had sent a report to the General Manager, West Central Railway, Jabalpur and to you vide letter no. 88 dated 13th January, 2007 regarding the facilities available and problems being faced by the passengers at all the small stations falling en-route my journey by Itarsi-Satna Shuttle on 10th January, 2007 between Jabalpur and Katni. Railways Ministry and railway administration has not taken any positive initiative towards that. I would expect the railway ministry to pay attention to the report and to make efforts towards protecting the interests of the rural and poor people.

Hon. Sir, through you I would like to humbly convey to the hon. Minister of Railways that there is a heavy discontentment among the people of Jabalpur and Mahakaushal region because of continous neglect by the railways since independence and the same has been peacefully expressed in Jabalpur from time to time. I feel that the people of Jabalpur and Mahakaushal have given an example of extreme patience but the continuous neglect and non-implementation of schemes announced by the hon. Railway Minister himself is increasing the discontentment amongst the common public. I am sure that hon. Minister of Railways will not test the patience of the people of Jabalpur any further and will provide sufficient funds for the Jabalpur-Gondia boradgauge railway line while presenting the actual figures before the public and will also take concrete and practical steps towards completing this work before the year 2010.

Hon'ble Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the rail budget.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore): Sir, while speaking on the rail budget, what usually happens is that we come to our constituency only after speaking about other topics in the budget.

13.39 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHAN *in the Chair*]

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, we have started the debate. Please be seated in your seats because I could not find out who is speaking. I would like to identify the hon. Member who is speaking. All are standing together.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Sir, I was saying that generally we talk about our constituency in the last, but the entire Madhya Pradesh is very unhappy with this rail budget, that is why I am talking about my constituency in the beginning. I am also taking up my constituency in the beginning because in the end you ask us to wind up quickly.

I have been told that the general norms for the railways could be 17-18 per thousand kilometers. In fact I would like to say what to talk about norms, if some attention is paid towards the map of rail network in Madhya Pradesh, we will find that till date Madhya Pradesh has been quitely neglected. If one has to go to any corner of the country then he will have to pass through Madhya Pradesh and only that much of railway line has been provided to our State. Till date no attention has been paid towards Madhya Pradesh in any rail budget with regard to the development of the State. Hon. Minister of Railways has satisfied himself by giving only three to new railway tracts in the entire State. He feels that he has done a very good job. He says that one has to pass through Madhya Pradesh. It does not seem that Madhya Pradesh has got anything else in this Rail Budget. Not a single large project has been earmarked for Madhya Pradesh. Not only this, I have also spoken about the project which was inaugurated by the Hon. Prime Minister and Hon. Minister. I do not understand when projects are inaugurated and the place from where the projects start. Maksi, Dewan, Idnore and Dahod rail lines were such rail lines but it is a very old project. We vigorously pursued the work of Maksi-Dewan line and got it completed. It was an on-going project and then Hon. Minister went to Jhabua with Hon. Prime Minister for its inauguration so that he may take credit for completion of the project. We do not have any grudge, he can go there to take credit and may put up a nameplate too but with it he should have also granted funds for it.

The cost of this project worth Rs. 300 to 350 crore got escalated to Rs. 671 crore due to the delaying of the project by the railways. I would urge upon hon. Minister to put the things back into order. Now the project cost has gone up to Rs. 1450 crore. I have an objection to this that he makes populist statements in the budget, the project cost gets escalated due to non-grant of funds for the same. He accompanied the hon. Prime Minister to inaugurate the big projects, although that is wrong, but it is done. They should have granted a good amount of money, anywhere between 100-200 crore rupees, so that the land acquisition work could be completed quickly. You would be surprised to know that last year, Rs. 10 crore was given and this year Rs. 2 crore have been given which means that even land acquisition also will not be possible with this amount. This shows their intentions that they do not want any work in Madhya Pradesh, that is my allegation.

Similarly, there is gauge conversion of the Ratlam-Khandura railway line. This is a very important gauge conversion for us. Gauge conversion has been completed beyond Ratlam. Seven pair of trains which were running on metergauge from one place to Ajmer and Udaipur were running to their maximum capacity. This rail service had been running for a long time. Now it has been discontinued. Its gauge conversion has been included in it but the amount of funds granted is very meagre, the project cost is Rs. 1400, crore, but funds of only Rs. 30 crore have been given. I would like to get it clarified, from the hon. Minister of Railways as to whether he intends to do some work in Madhya Pradesh at all or not? Besides, what other works are being done? The gauge conversion will take time but for now our connectivity to Udaipur-Ajmer has been disrupted, and we have repeatedly requested in this regard. Earler seven pair of trains used to run on this route. We have said that this connection must be started again via Indore to Ujjain, Ratlam. I would like to thank him for starting a train on this line but earlier 7 pair of trains used to run daily on this line.

I would request the Hon'ble Minister to note that he has given a single train from Indore to Udaipur and that too only thrice a week. What is this? This is like a drop in the ocean? How does he want to run the railways? It is useless to talk about Indore and Manmaadh, it has been said that the State Government should contribute 50 per cent. I would like to say and as I have already stated that as far as the rate of return is concerned, it is 9 to 10 per cent at present but they want it to be 14

[Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan]

percent, which shall be that much in the coming one or one and a half year because Indore is such a place. I would like to say that they are doing injustice to Indore for the last many years. According to you, 17 per cent of the country's railway line is in Madhya Pradesh but I think we have not even touched 15 per cent and you are asking the State to pay 50 per cent of the cost. On what basis are you are asking the State to pay 50 per cent of the cost. On what basis are you asking for 50 per cent of the cost to be paid by any backward state and you are putting that since Maharashtra has paid so should Madhya Pradesh also? I would like to say that a Minisiter from Madhya Pradesh had visited here and a big inauguration has taken place. I think Bhuria ji has not seen the budget, he will get really angry that after the inauguration, only Rs. 20 crore has been given instead of Rs. 1400 crores and they are asking us to pay 50 per cent for indore and Manmadh. I only have to say that we had demanded a number of trains and I have been trying continuously that be it Indore or Bangalore attention is paid towards this. Now I come to the budget. I earnestly convey my sincere thanks for various concessions given in the budget. Students and women have been given due consideration. BhuriaJi, are you with me, please talk about it as only 20 crores have been given in spite of its inauguration by the Prime Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): What is wrong in it? Your misunderstanding would be clarified. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: The project is worth 1400 crores and only 20 crores are being given. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: You are being provided with a facility. ... *(Interruptions)* Do you think that the Prime Minister of the country makes complaints anywhere. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: That is why I have welcomed it. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: That scheme has been cleared and will be completed by 2011. You will be taken there. Why are you worried? ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: You are not getting my point. I have welcomed that scheme and still appreciating it but funds should be provided. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA: 20 crores are being given. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Where it is? Just go through the relevant part of the budget. ... *(Interruptions)* Do not delude yourself refer to the budget paper. ... *(Interruptions)* I am discussing the things after going through the budget thoroughly. ... *(Interruptions)* You have kept us under an illusion till now, and you yourself want to remain deluded.

Now I would like to discuss further. It is good that several concessions have been given for women, recipients of Ashok Chakra and students in the budget but it all sums up to not more than 180 crores *i.e.* a budget of thousands of crores of rupees, but, it is also an illusion. The budget stated very emphatically that such and such concessions are being given to this and that. I am thankful for what has been given for women but I would like to submit that the contracts for vending or canteen at the station used to be given to the women NGOs earlier but now that practice has been stopped. I would like to suggest that if we really want to give some facilities or concessions to women, this practice should be resumed. Some contracts should be reserved for women self help groups and NGOs. Besides, they have claimed in the Budget that steps are being taken for the welfare of railway employees. In this regard I would like to suggest to constitute self help groups of widows of railway employees, housewives of porters and sweepers. Impart them training and then give them contracts regarding ticket booking, vending or canteen. Only then we would believe that he really has an endeavour to do something for women. I thank him for the decision taken to enroll the porters as class-IV employees. However, I would like to draw your attention towards the fraudulent practice involved therein which has come to my notice. Badge has a great importance for porters. I do not know what cropped up in his mind that in my Ratlam division their badges have been replaced with a card to be worn around the neck.

Here in Lok Sabha also, I-cards have been provided to the members and officers. Officers keep them in their pockets as otherwise they create hindrance while working. But porters have been given a very big card and they

have been asked to wear it all the time. It creates trouble for them also while lifting the baggage etc. Bhuraiji you please examine the situation personally. You have taken back their badges but what was the problem in wearing the badges. I have also heard that the middle men were charging 10-12 thousand for issuing of badges but since their inclusion as class- IV employees, middle men are charging upto 1 lakh for the same. Therefore, I have an apprehension that some irregularities might take place in the scheme instead of providing benefit to porters.

Now, I come to the budget. I would like to state a very important point, for which I have made lots of efforts. Please allow me to speak for ten more minutes. I would like to state about the compensation paid in accident cases. He is denying the accidents. Besides, he has made tall claims about the changes per million train kms. It includes only the major accidents but what do you say about the minor accidents? Alone in Indore an accident is taking place in every two months during shunting. I had suggested to acquire the land of Swdeshi mill in Indore for expansion but they are not considering my suggestion. Accidents are taking place there as there is no space for shunting causing damage to bogies. Just a day before yesterday an accident took place while shunting was being carried out in Shanti Express. Such accidents cause loss to life and property. Similar accidents might be taking place at other places also but these are not taken in records. Moreover, after accidents, they prevaricate over compensation. They do not pay compensation and then say that the number of accidents have come down. There is an example from my parliamentary constituency Indore. There is a girl Neha Sharma who lost her feet in the accident but no one is bothering to pay her compensation. They do not even frame the case and claim that the number of accidents have come down. Further, I would like to state that the cases of accidents are not investigated properly. The 3005 Hawrah-Amritsar train had metan accident seven years ago but its enquiry report has not come out so far. Such is the functioning of Railways.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, now I come on board cleaning. I feel sorry when they make tall claims. We are waiting for on board cleaning in the trains. However, I have written a number of times regarding the present situation of on board cleaning in our trains. People from my constituency have also written letters in this regard. We often come across rats, cockroaches and filthy toilets in the trains. At least trains should be cleaned when we travel by them. It should be cleaned at the starting point and at the terminal point. At least this should be taken care of. It seems on board cleaning is still a distant dream. Therefore, please pay attention to this issue also.

One thing I would like to mention that the Hon'ble Minister of Railways is making tall claims. He is saying that they would increase the load carrying capacity. He has used a special term "Volume Game" for it *i.e.* they would increase the wagon turn around and carry the additional load. He has mentioned how it would be done. All facilities would be provided to increase the volume game and to double the steel traffic. He has mentioned to increase the steel traffic from 120 million to 200 million tonnes and container traffic to 26 million tonne, freight corridor. ... *(Interruptions)*. Please allow me to speak for five more minutes, I am going to conclude. Please do not interrupt me.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

Hon. Members, more than 100 hon. Members have given their names to speak. Even if we sit for the whole week, we will not be able to finish it. What can I do?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Sir, what can we do, these people show us pipedreams. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will advise the hon. Members to put their written speeches. That is the only remedy.

Madam, please conclude now.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Sir, I am sorry. I am saying sorry as these people tell baseless lies which do not stand any scrutiny. ... *(Interruptions)*. Is this book all falsehood? I have looked through it which is why I feel angry about it. They talk about increasing the number of wagons, increasing the load, increasing the capacity and they talk about freight corridor. They say they have earned Rs. 14,000 crores. They may have made this profit by increasing freight and increasing load on goods trains. They may carry 30 tonnes instead of 20 tonnes

[Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan]

but what is the capacity of the lines? They do not take this into consideration and Mr. Chairman, Sir, that is why I feel angry. What will happen in future? This is written in the book circulated by them, I am not saying it of my own accord. What safety measures have they taken? Please inform us of the condition of the bridges and tracks on which they propose to run more trains and earn Rs. 14,000 crores as a result. I will not say much but they themselves have written down these facts. The Government will have to listen to a few facts. I am not wrong. Where will these goods trains run? They have themselves written in the pink book. They talk about one bridge when in fact over 80 percent of the bridges are more than a hundred years old. They have stated it in the pink book. They talk about Mallialapandiyam bridge and say that more iron-ore and more coal would be transported but these bridges built to carry a load of CC +8+2 tonnes iron-ore would not be able to carry the additional load and the project cost would be more than Rs. 4 crores. How much provision have they made for the purpose? They say Rs. 8 lakh. What do they want to do? The bridge is in a dilapidated state. Further, let us talk about Hyderabad yard. Here also they propose to ferry iron-ore. The project cost is estimated at Rs. 3 crores and the provision is merely Rs. 30 lakhs. They have said that more than 80 per cent of the bridges over which the density of train traffic is proposed to be increased are more than a hundred years old. What will happen to these bridges when the load of traffic over them is increased?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Sir, what should I do? My life is in danger. Future of my children is in danger. When these trains fall off these bridges, it will cause loss of lives. Who would be the ones to die? Our children would die. If the goods being ferried in such trains are lost in the rivers, our country would have to bear the loss. The bridge situated on the Itarsi-Jabalpur-Bhopal-Bina route was constructed in 1870. The flow of river along the Itarsi-Jabalpur route is extremely fast and the bridge over the river needs to be repaired on an urgent basis. They are also asking for funds for the repairs.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You give it in writing. What can I do?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Sir, these issues trouble me. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: What can I do? You please conclude now.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Sir, there are many other issues. All these things should be noted. I would like to point out a small thing. They have pointed it out themselves. They have written that bridges situated on the Itarsi-Bhopal route are more than a hundred years old. They have stated that trains with additional load are required to be run over these bridges hence special attention needs to be paid to the condition of these bridges. For this purpose the requirement is of Rs. 450 lakh and the budget provision is merely Rs. 15 lakh. I would like to know what the Government intends to do about it? They make big claims. This issue is about bridges. Let us see what happens in future.

Sir, you will have to allow me two minutes more. I am not talking unnecessarily. Sir, I am sorry but it would not be of any use to hold discussions here otherwise. They talk about steel containers but has someone asked them to reveal the true situation of our factories particularly the Kapurthala factory. Let someone ask this question of the Government.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Madam, there are 50 speakers from BJP alone.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: You would not stop.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: All right, I will conclude in two minutes. You don't wish to listen because I am talking about the future.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was Women's Day yesterday; how can I control her?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: I just want to say that they make tall claims but there is no provision for safety measures or factories in the Budget. Hence, I would like to request that when they talk about new designs, high capacity etc.

14.00 hrs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister is talking of giving power in the hands of those who do not have the capability of making use of that power. The Minister is saying himself that I have created a misleading illusion. Yes, we all know that this is an illusion which we have observed earlier too. An illusion is never real and he had also woven an illusion in front of the people of Bihar when he had talked of transporting two buffaloes on a scooter. That is why he has come under fire in Bihar. This illusion-making will not work here. This is the Indian Railways. That is why I would like to say to the Minister. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Brahmananda Panda, you can speak, if you want. She would not stop.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: I will conclude my speech. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Unless she concludes her speech, it is difficult for me to start. ... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would only like to say that. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan, you are a very senior and learned person. Please conclude now. How can I control other young Members if senior Members like you are not cooperating?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will conclude now. The hon. Minister says that he is scoring goal after goal and that at every announcement 'Chak de Rail !' should be the slogan on all lips. But what will happen when bridges collapse and accidents take place. Then everyone will start saying "Hai Lalu, hai Lalu". He talks of the vision for 2025. My only regret is that people will stop having faith in politicians. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Brahmanand Panda, she would not stop. Please start your speech.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Mr. Chairman, the Minister should state the factual position instead of creating mirages. It would be better for the Minister to state facts.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I would like to inform you all that hereafter I will ring the bell and then I will call the next hon. Member to speak. Anything that is said after the Bell will not go into the record. If things go on like this, then how can I control and conduct the House?

*SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Respected Sir, I stand here today to deliberate on the Railway Budget 2008-09 which has received both laurels and brickbats from the thinking public. At the outset I must mention that the Railway Minister's opening remarks about a cash surplus of Rs 25,000 crore before dividend is clearly a meaningless figure. The surplus after payment of all dues, including dividend, to the general exchequer is only Rs. 13,534 crore. This is what can be invested. This is Mr. Lalu Prasadji's fifth consecutive Rail Budget. This year's Railway Budget reads like a wish list for the Indian Railways. Announcements like capacity building of high density network, port connectivity, freight corridors, stainless steel wagons, higher axle loads etc. on the freight side are praiseworthy and in the passenger sector, use of stainless coaches, green toilets, improved passenger infromation systems and facilities, reduction of fares etc. will please many no doubt, yet there is cause for concern too. The pronouncements do not match the deeds. The budget is an occasion to review the progress of important projects. Apart from the DFC, mega projects like the wheel factory at Chhapra, Electric Loco Factory

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri B. Mahtab]

at Madhepura, the coach unit at RaeBareilly and the Diesel Loco Factory have yet to take off. A new coach factory in Kerala has been added to this list now. The list of sanctioned railway projects of maybe more than Rs. 75,000 crore is now a serious worry since more get added each year with painfully slow completion. The production units of Indian Railway loco works at Chittaranjan, Varanasi, coach units at Chennai and Kapurthala, wheel factory at Bengaluru can be made into international hubs supplying to railway system worldwide with more capital investment and new technology. But very little has been said on this. The minister had announced a possible corporatisation of Rail Coach Factory Kapurthala in the 2006-07 budget. What progress has been done in this direction?

Budget 2007-08 had spoken of pre-feasibility studies for high speed train corridors which do not find any mention this year. I hope the idea has not been abandoned as such links will bring economic development around important cities as it has taken place in other countries. But the Railway Minister has demonstrated lack of vision. I fail to understand the logic of growth rate of 8% by the Railways when the entire economy is growing at a rate of 8.5% to 9%. The cash surplus figures, which I have stated earlier in just bunkum. If the Railways has a cash surplus of Rs. 25000 crore then what was the need for seeking budgetary support from the Union Finance Ministry? What one should understand is how much is the quantum of investible surplus.

There are a lot of anomalies when one goes into the details of this year's Railway Budget. The freight loading may be taken as an example. The freight loading target of 850 million tonnes is marginally less than the 8 percent growth rate target of 858 million tonnes projected for the Ninth Plan by the Railways. How can one say there is progress?

Similarly an adhoc provision of Rs. 5000 crore for expenditure arising from anticipated recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission would appear to be less than the 30 percent increase experienced at the time of implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission recommendation. It can only be hoped that this figure will not be wide of the mark. The allotment of only Rs. 600 crore for bridges, as compared to Rs. 700 crore for Road over Bridge/Road under Bridges seem inadequate when one takes into consideration that a large number of bridges even now require attention, being more than 100 years old and particularly considering the increased axle loads being permitted or proposed to be introduced. Higher levels of Overloading are taking place now. I am sure the Government is aware about the Railway study made recently on the South Eastern sector which has revealed that the extent of overloading has gone up significantly after the axle load was increased to 22.9 tonnes from 20.32 tonnes. We are all aware that South Eastern Railway deals primarily with iron ore traffic. Earlies, that is, before 2005, wagons were overloaded to the extent of 24-25 tonnes per axle most of the time. However, in 2006 and 2007, when Railways allowed higher levels (22.9 tonnes) of axle load, wagons were over loaded at 28-29 tonnes and even 30 tonnes per axle at times. Excess loads damages the rail tracks and wheels resulting in faster wear and tear. For Railways, which uses the same tracks to such passenger trains this has emerged as a major concern as damaged rails could even result in accidents if not detected on time, apart from higher maintenance costs.

In the past four years, Indian Railways transported an additional 233 million tonnes of originating freight traffic and in the next four years, it proposes to handle an additional 310 mt. How it is going to be achieved? It is not clear from the Budget for 2008-09. What has been presented in the Budget are some sign posts; not a clear road map. The freight traffic growth of the Railways has been steadily dwindling. For the past few years, the Railways has been transporting on an average an additional 60 mt every year. The fallout of it is that the Railways continue to lose its market share to other modes of transportation. Nothing substantial has been done to meet this challenge.

I now come to another unpleasant issue. There was no crying demand for bringing the fares down, certainly not from those who travelled AC First, AC Sleeper or AC Chair Car. They would not have minded if the Railway Minister had maintained the status quo for they choose the higher classes of their own volition, only after making sure that they can afford it. The fare reduction of those classes are not also such as to attract significantly more passengers. Similarly, the tinkering with freight reduction too will have only a marginal effect on prices, if at all. There is no specific assurance in the Budget speech that so many new trains will not cause serious traffic congestion and affect the quality and regularity of track maintenance and that they will not compromise safety consideration. New passenger trains also eat into the time and space for movement of goods train which are not

only the chief bread winner of the system but also keep the sinew's of the economy strong. Any operational decision that slows them down will have a cascading effect in the sense of pulling down the volume and velocity of transactions in all resorts. For these reasons, the Traffic wing of the Railway Board had always been opposed to excessive number of new passenger trains.

This year Fifty-three new trains have been announced on a saturated system, without making provision to improve the infrastructure. Speed of trains is the other aspect which needs deliberation. On a high-density network, accounting for nearly one-third of the country's total rail network of 66,000 km, the coverage speed of passenger train is 55 km and goods train 20 km. Even Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express run at an average speed of 75 km. The Fastest passenger train is Shatabdi Express between Bhopal and Kanpur with an average speed of 140 km. Isn't this well below the speed of fast trains the Railway Minister vowed to introduce after visiting countries where such trains operate? There are some unanswered questions even today. Why is the average turnaround time of wagons are still so high despite slashing of the free time and like in demurrage? Why are more diesel locomotives proposed to be acquired despite the announcement to go for electrification of more routes?

It is good to know that issues such as port connectivity and elbowing of lines will receive a good deal of attention. But then one couldn't be sure of the outcome of such an initiative if the issue is left of Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd. to handle. There are instances where the port connectivity and doubling projects have made little progress because RVNL is not convinced of their viability. The real problems facing the Railways are an acute congestion on certain busy freight routes and chronic shortage of locomotives. These problems have not been addressed in the Budget.

Railway Minister proposes to upgrade infrastructure at an estimated investment of Rs. 75,000 crore in the next seven years. Where is the money going to come from? If the Railways wants bigger private participation, it will perhaps have to take a re-look at its present public-private partnership model. Correct policies to attract private investments are needed. Sadly, the Rail Budget lacks such policy initiatives. What has happened to the dedicated rail freight corridor? We have been hearing about this corridor for the past three years. Prime Minister had laid the foundation stone for this project way back in September/October 2006 in Mumbai and Ludhiana. Has a single brick been laid so far? We have been hearing about the plans to convert New Delhi Station into a world-class station. But nothing has been done so far to execute this project. If this pace of work continues, can we expect the work to be completed before the Commonwealth Games?

Railway Minister has made a number of announcements relating to new trains, lowering the train fare etc. On a careful study, one finds that a number of New trains can only ply after around 7 to 8 years because tracks are not there and in many places gauge conversion is necessary, which may take years. I wil give one example which is very glaring. It is announcement of running a new passenger train from Hajipur to Phulberia. This Phulberia is a wellknown place because of the Railway Minister. But a passenger train can only ply after new track is laid. Can it be done in the ensuing financial year? Will this passenger train ply in 2008-09? I leave it to your wisdom. Similarly there are a dozen of new trains that are announced by Railway Minister which can ply only after tracks are converted from Narrow gauze to Broad Gauze.

Next is the most interesting part relating to lowering the passenger fare. A general impression amongst the public is that henceforward train fare will become cheaper. But is it so? This fare reduction has come with certain conditions. It is applicable only on Sleeper Class, AC Chair Car and 3 Tier where the reduction will be 2 percent provided the passengers travel in the newly designed high capacity compartments. I tried to find out what are these high capacity compartments. Today, normal Sleeper Class compartments have 72 Berths, the high capacity will have 84. AC 3 Tier has 64 and it will be enhanced to 72. AC chair car has 67 and it will increase to 102. Railways Minister has announced that new compartments are being manufactured. Those which have been sent for repair, will also come, he has said. But from close quarters of Rail Bhawan, it is learnt that, at present only 225 newly designed high capacity compartments are available. It will take not less than 7 to 8 years to convert all compartments to high capacity. Should we believe that the passengers have to wait till then?

The other announcement is relating to reduction of ticket-fare in some "popular" trains during peak hour. There are nearly 1600 Mail and Express trains plying in our country out of which 400 are considered, "Popular", I do not know in what category. It is very cumbersome to

[Shri B. Mahtab]

implement this, no doubt, but the general impression has been created through the Budget speech that train fare has been slashed though it is seasonal. Very strange are the ways of the Railways Minister. Strange indeed!

At this juncture I must raise certain issues for the consideration of the Railway Minister. It relates to Freedom Fighters. Since 70s, Freedom Fighters are provided with free rail travel pass for which Ministry of Home Affairs had deposited the money. The number of Freedom Fighters are quite less today in comparison to that of 70s or 80s. I have been appealing time and again that the restriction of travel in Super Fast Trains like Shatabdi, Jana Shatabdi and Rajdhani should go. They are old and infirm and very few of them actually travel. Why can't you provide them a little comfort. They donot seek priority in reservation. Allow them these superfast train travel only when vacancy is available.

I take this opportunity to reiterate again that for the speedy development of infrastructure in Orissa, Indian Railways should provide a package which includes allocation of funds for ongoing projects, sanction of new lines, introduction of new trains, extension and increase in frequency of mail/express trains, and improve passenger amenities. There is an urgent need to complete Daitary-Banspani BG rail link and introduce coaching services in this sector. Rail link costruction work between Bhawanipatna to Junagarh should start immediately. There is a demand to extend Naupada-Gunupur BG rail link to Thiruvali which would enable increase in cargo generation at Gopalpur port. Two projects, such as Khurda Road-Bolangir and Haridaspur-Paradeep proposed rail link is progressing at a very slow pace. In these new rail lines the rate of return is high, yet I fail to understand why Railway is not allocating funds for completion of these two projects in a time bound manner.

The survey report of Talcher-Gopalpur Broad gauze rail-link is before the Ministry which has indicated a favourable rate of return. The recent thrust of industrialisation in Orissa with setting up of Steel, Power and Aluminium Plants would require a dedicated railway link between Talcher to Gopalpur for export and import of raw materials and finished products. However, I must thank Railway Minister for starting 4 new trains and increasing the frequency of Rajdhani Express. The new train connecting Allahabad to Sambalpur was a long pending demand which has been adhered to. I would urge upon the Minister to consider starting a new Express train from Paradeep to Mumbai which would connect the east-coast to the western shores of our country. In this Budget, attempt has been made to recognise the problem of unmanned level crossing and congestion at busy level crossing which needs Road over bridge. Two such Road overbridges are essential in and around Cuttack now. One at Gopalpur and another at Kapilash Road-Tangi. Necessary steps may be taken to include these two projects in this year's Budget.

As large parts of Orissa are being developed by East Coast Zone, the functioning of this Zone is of great interest to us. It was after long fight that this zone was created. Our impression was that it would be full fledged by now in its 10 years of existence. But that is not so. I will give you instances. In 2007-08, Sambalpur-Titlagarh and Titlagarh-Raipur Doubling project was listed. Asian Development Bank was supposed to finance this Rs. 1680 crore project. Last year provision of Rs. 10 crore was made. The technical survey and detailed estimate was done by East Coast Railway and after that tender was floated. The area comes under East Coast Railway Zone. But Railway Vikash Nigam didn't entrust these job to the project implementation unit of East Coast Railways but has given one to Kolkata and another to Bilashpur Project implementation unit. Why this has been done? There has been cost escalation of high order. Almost double the amount of the project cost. Will the Minister look into it? Also appraise us the reason why the jobs were taken away from East Coast Zone.

Before I conclude, I must say that Railway Minister's performance as the Railway Minister in the past five years has been impressive in the sense that he presented five budgets in a row, all surpluses and has succeeded in projecting Indian Railways as one of the high performers. But would it not also be in order to have a performance assessment of how many of the promises made in the earlier Budgets have actually been delivered upon. What needs to be remembered is that, despite impressive strides in recent years on the financial and safety fronts, when compared to major world railways, the Indian Railways has a very long way to go in terms of quality of service and productivity. There are tremendous challenges to be overcome. Therefore, there is no room for complacency or misplaced munificence.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now Shri Brahmananda Panda.

[Translation]

*SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA (Jagatsinghpur): Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget of 2008-2009. The Railway Budget is like a milestone in the progress of a nation. It's a reflection on the unity, integrity and diversity of our huge country. Railway is the unifying force in this country.

This House has witnessed discussions regarding the welfare of our population, especially of the deprived sections like the labourers, the farmers and the working class. Everybody cutting across party lines expresses sympathy, but sometimes it works to be a mere lip service.

Sir, India is a land of diversity with many languages, religions, castes and creeds. I come from the holy land of Lord Jagannath, who is a symbol of secularism. He had a devotee named Salabega who was a Muslim and a devotee named 'Dasia' who was from the Dalit community. In this context sir, when I rise to speak my heartbeats for my people. Whenever any national leader visits my State, they all highlight the poverty, destitution and deprivation of my people. Orissa is in famous as a backward, poverty-stricken State.

In the recent past Orissa has had some distinguished visitors like Mr. Sharad Pawar etc. Now Mr. Rahul Gandhi is on a tour to Orissa. He has expressed his anguish after witnessing the deprived state of Orissa's poor in general and Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe community in particular. The sincerity of their sympathy is doubtful.

Sir, you are a leader of the proletariats and you stand for the interest of the proletariat so. Hence, I believe you will sympathise with me and allow me to point out the flaws in the Railway Budget. Sir, as far as safety and security of the passengers are concerned, very little has been done in this regard. A Railway passenger is subjected to loot, dacoity, accident as well as terrorism. A person travelling by train is unsure of reaching his destination. Hon'ble Railway Minister is speaking of modernization. But he must provide a secured environment for railway passengers. I congratulate him for his steps which are taken to extend facilities to women and senior citizens. I also hope that he will look at Orissa with a benevolent eye. Orissa is a backward State but not a poor State. It is a beautiful land filled with natural resources, minerals, forests and has a long coast line of 480 Kms. Visitors to Orissa get spellbound by seeing the beauty of this land. That is why our Chief Minister has written a letter to the Hon'ble Railway Minister to pay attention to the demands of Orissa, so that the Railway map of Orissa will change. Orissa is now a favourite destination of industrial groups like POSCO, Arcellor Mittal and Vedanta etc. Orissa needs to make giant strides to catch up with other States. Hence development of Railway infrastructure with Port Connectivity is very vital to the progress of Orissa.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, please conclude now.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Sir, you must give me a considerable amount of time. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: That is what I have told you. Or, somebody else may have to come here; I cannot be here.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: In that case, I am not going to speak anything.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, you must allow me a considerable amount of time to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can give the remaining portion of your speech, in writing. You may write any number of pages, and place it on the Table; it will be taken as recorded.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Sir, this is not fair. When I am here to speak about my State, I should be allowed to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Whatever idea you have about the Railways, you may write an essay or even a book; you may place it on the Table; and it would be considered as recorded. Please understand that we have time constraint.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Then, why these people are allowed to speak in the House. ... *(Interruptions)* That is why Orissa has become a backward State. I am here to speak about my State of Orissa. ... *(Interruptions)*

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Oriya.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Even in the evening you would not be here, but I will have to be here till midnight.

You may continue your speech. Try to conclude as early as possible.

[Translation]

*SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Sir, there are many projects which have been sanctioned by the Central Government but work is yet to start. There are some projects which remain unfinished due to dearth of funds. With a sufficient financial allocation the work can be completed. The Langigarh and Junagarh railway line needs to be completed. Members of the House Committee of Orissa Legislative Assembly and Chief Minister had met Hon'ble Railway Minister regarding this division.

Likewise there is the Khurda road and Bolangir railway line which remains pending from a long time. This is a tribal dominated area. The people remain backward due to regional imbalance and negligence by the Central Government. They remain cut off from the mainstream. That is why 'Naxalism' is on the rise here. Repeatedly we have demanded in this august House that the Khurda-Bolangir Railway Project work should be speeded up but in vain. The Central Government is unnecessarily delaying the release of fund. Similarly we have many on going projects like the Haridaspur-Paradeep railway line, Angul-Duburi railway line, Sukinda-Talcher-Bimlagarh line, Rupsa-Bangiriposi and Nuapada-Gunupur railway line etc. which await allocation of funds. People of these areas are now indulging in Naxalism and Maoism etc. There are also some railway projects where doubling and electrification of railway line are very essential like Daitari-Banspani railway line, Talcher-Sambalpur, Haridaspur-Paradeep railway line Koraput-Rayagada, Sambalpur-Talcher etc. There are many projects which awaits survey. We draw the attention of the Railway Minister to ensure an early survey. Further, the second line for Khurda-Puri requires adequate allocation for which work may be expedited.

We demand introduction of new trains from Bhubaneswar to Koraput, from Jeypur to Malkangiri, from Bargarh-Nuapada, Berhampur, Phulbhani to Puri etc.

Sir, the Konark temple is a world famous architectural marvel. Gurudev Ravindra Nath Tagore had admired the poetic skill of Oriyas in Konark temple. This beautiful place will attract more tourists if well-connected by Railway. Sir Phulbani is a district of tribals. Even after 60 years of independence the people of this area remain untouched by Railway. They have neither seen a train nor a railway track. It is a very sad commentary on the state of affairs today. Thus, Puri-Konark be connected with rail.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister to introduce some new super fast trains which will connect Orissa to New Delhi. In Orissa there are trains without pantry-car facility for example the Heerakhand Exp, which runs between Bhubaneswar and Koraput. Tribal districts of Orissa should be well-connected to New Delhi.

Now I will speak about my own constituency, Jagatsinghpur which houses the famous Paradeep port. It's a milestone in our nation's economic progress. It is the deepest natural port in the east coast. Paradeep port earns revenue for the country. However, the full potential of this port is not being properly exploited because the second railway bridge over river Mahanadi has not been completed yet. Again Sir, my constituency houses the shrine of Goddess Maa Sarala who is compared to Mata Vaishno Devi. But the place has no railway connectivity and hence tourists face difficulty. The trains which ply between Paradeep to Bhubaneswar may be further extended to Puri with a stoppage at this place of pilgrimage. Sir we have been demanding for a long time that Rajdhani Express should ply between Bhubaneswar and New Delhi on a daily basis. That has not happened. Sir, I would like to draw you attention to Junagarh-Ambaguda railway line and Kantabanjhi-Jeypur railway line which should be laid via Khariar and Nawarangpur. Further 2807/2808 trains to be operated daily. Sir these areas have predominantly tribal population. Laying down of railway lines will integrate them to the mainstream. Our Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik dreams of a economically strong, vibrant and progressive Orissa. His dreams can only be fulfilled if the Central Government and the Ministry of Railways in particular lends a helping hand. Funds should be provided to expedite the on-going projects. The financial aid should come in a time-bound manner so that the projects can see the light of the day. Sir I would conclude with a poem which was recited by Gopabandhu Das which describing the beauty of lake Chilika...

'Oh' train do stop here for a moment,
I want to enjoy the scenic beauty,
Rare, unimaginable, unique and unparalled.

**English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Oriya laid on the Table.

Sir, I thank you for allowing me to speak on the Railway Budget.

Jai Jagannath.*

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON (Lohardaga): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all, I would like to thank hon. Prime Minister and Smt. Sonia Gandhiji, under whose able leadership and guidance the UPA Government is being run. After this I would like to thank Shri Lalu Prasadji for presenting such a good Rail Budget.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, three years back when Shri Lalu Prasad ji was reading out the Rail Budget, he had quoted a couplet –"Kaun Kehta hai aasma mei chhed nahi ho sakta, tabiyat se ek pathar to uchhallo yaroo". It is not an exaggeration to say that during the last four years Indian Railways has been completely transformed. Railways has given a new direction, a new thinking to the public sector undertakings of the country as to how these public sector undertakings which were running into losses could earn profits.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Railway Minister has increased railway facilities for the passengers thereby making their journey tension free. Online coach indication, display board and online train arrival departure information boards are a few positive steps in this direction.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of hon. Minister of Railways towards certain problems being faced by the passengers. Today when I was coming to Delhi from Ranchi, I came to know that all the trains running via Kanpur to Aligarh are running late. When I asked about the reason for the delay. I was told that due to fog the trains were running late. It is the month of March now, but during the months of December, January and Feburary the passengers genuinely have to face a lot of problems due to fog. It is a matter of happiness, as I have, read in the newspaper, that the railways is developing some technique so that trains could be run even when fog is there saving passengers from inconvenience. Railways connects the entire country from all the directions like North, South, East, West and brings people of all the States together.

Sir, there are certain forests and hilly regions in North-East, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh etc. where there is no railway line even today. People in those areas have never seen a train. I would like to request hon. Minister to expand the rail network in such backward and far-flung areas where tribal and backward people are living.

Sir, a lot of progress has been made by the railways from the point of view of profit, facilities and security but still there is one general complaint against the Railways. As Madam Sumitra Mahajanji was telling, the projects taken up by the railways are delayed a lot in their completion. The reason behind this is that there is no priority fixed for them and also there is no fixed time limit for the completion of such projects. If railways starts a project, the small children become grown up and those who are young at that time become old but the railway project does not get completed. The Railway Ministry will have to bring about a change in its approach. It has to be ensured that whatever project is taken up that should be taken up on priority basis and a certain time limit should be fixed for its completion. When all the works are being completed in the country under specific planning then the Railways should also complete all its ongoing projects on time.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next Speaker is Shri Prabodh Panda. Hon. Member, you can lay your speech on the Table of the House.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON: Sir, I have just started. I would like to suggest the Railway Ministry to constitute a Committee of experts of the Planning Commission, Railway Ministry and Economists and this Committee should see as to how funds could be arranged so that all the pending and ongoing schemes could be completed. There are a number of railway projects which are of social and economic importance in the country, but these could not be launched due to low rate of return. Now the rate of return has been kept at 14 percent. Due to this a number of schemes do not get implemented. This is the main reason as to why after independence there has been very less expansion of railways. Approximately only 11 thousand kilometers of railway has been laid since 1951. This expansion is very less. China has gone ahead of us. I would like to urge that there should be expansion of railways. Funds should be mobilized for this purpose. Public-Private Enterprises partnership should be encouraged for this.

[Dr. Rameshwar Oraon]

Sir, I shall take only one more minute to speak. The mine owners or industry owners in mining areas and industrial areas should be asked to construct the railway lines in their areas under the supervision of railways. This will help in the fast expansion of railways. Till now there was a competition between rail and road journey but in future the competition between rail and air journey is going to increase further. Now you can see that a large number of flights are being introduced from the States and also from major cities of the country. People are opting for air travel instead of rail travel. Therefore, it is necessary to modernize the railways and improve facilities there.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, please take you seat.

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON: Sir, I will just read out my demands. ... *(Interruptions).*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please take your seat. ... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON: Sir, attention should be paid towards the projects lying pending in Jharkhand and they must be completed within a fixed time schedule. The survey for laying a railway line between Lohardagga-Tundla-Raurkela has been completed. Funds should be provided for starting the work on this project. Lohardagga-Tauri rail line which is under construction should be completed within the fixed time schedule so that the distance between Ranchi and Delhi could be reduced. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The reading material in your hand can be placed on the Table of the House.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON: Doubling of Ranchi-Lohardaga railway line should be carried out. Quota of recruitment of sports persons should also be increased in the Railway. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members do not listen to the Chair in spite of repeated requests made from the Chair about laying the speech on the Table of the House.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON: Ranchi-Delhi Railway Express should be run daily. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, you can place it on the Table of the House.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. RAMESHWAR ORAON: Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me time to speak.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will have to conclude it before midnight.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): At the very outset, I must express my reservation about the discussion on the items listed in the List of Business.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are the only speaker from your Party, so you can take eleven minutes.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Items listed at Sl. Nos. 13 to 18 have been clubbed together. It is a matter of injustice that item No. 18, which is a very important one, has been clubbed with other items. It should have been discussed separately, but it has been clubbed with other items. Since I have got the right to speak on that subject as the mover of the Resolution, I shall speak then and, therefore, at this point I am not going into that. I will be speaking now only on the Railway Budget.

On that date, when the hon. Railway Minister presented the Railway Budget, he presented a very rosy picture of the Indian Railways. I broadly support this

Railway Budget. He claimed that he has elevated the status of the Indian Railways from a loss-making undertaking to a profit-making undertaking, and it is very good. I heard his speech in my constituency, Kharagpur. He said that he elevated the Indian Railways status like a magician. It is said that magic is nothing but talk and tricks. It is nothing but full of tricks and talk. What was the talk that we heard and what were the tricks? Let me speak something about his tricks.

Now, the privatization process is going on. So far, I know particularly that the hon. Minister and his Party are against indiscriminate privatization. However, different activities of Railways are getting privatized day by day. Catering system has already been privatized and the contracts have gone to *crorepatis* or millionaires and not to the ordinary yolks or people. Maintenance activity, even station management, has been privatized.

Coming to the Railway Workshops, nothing has been said about it in this Railway Budget. In my constituency, Kharagpur, there is a big Railway Workshop, but there is no security, facilities or amenities for the employees there. The lady employees do not even have separate toilets; security problem is there. A few months back, two employees died in an accident. This is the situation now.

We have heard that one of the largest printing presses is going to be privatized. It was based on Rakesh Mohan Committee's observation and recommendation. The former Railway Minister has taken to the privatization path, and now Shri Lalu Prasad is following that path. The stakes in the largest public sector utility, the Indian Railways, are getting diluted. This is my charge and allegation against this Ministry.

Coming to other tricks, by only changing the category, that is, from Express to Super Express, they have earned Rs. 75 crore, but no extra amenities, no extra stoppages and no extra facilities have been provided to the passengers. By merely changing the category, they have increased the fares. They are talking about decreased ticket fares, but by merely changing the category from Express to Super Express, they have increased the ticket fares to that of the Super Express trains. This is the trick.

The other trick is something which is not stated in the Parliament. Many things are done by administrative steps. It is one of them - changing the category from Express Trains to Super Fast Trains.

I am coming to the cancellation charge. It is getting doubled. They have earned an income of Rs. 100 crore only by increasing the cancellation charge. Earlier advance booking could be made only up to 60 days. Now, it is made as 90 days. By this, they are going to earn more than Rs. 550 crore.

Another thing is on Tatkal facility. What is happening in Tatkal facility? They have done something by administrative step here also. This is the trick. Ten per cent of berths were kept for Tatkal bookings. Now, it is 30 per cent. Earlier Tatkal was for 24 hours. Now, it is extended to 120 hours. This is the trick. From Tatkal, 50 per cent would be cleared for wait-listed passengers. So, income will be increased by this. All these steps will put burden on the ordinary passengers. This is not expected from the Railway Ministry - at least from the Railway Ministry of the UPA Government.

Now, I am coming to the problems of the porters. It is very bad to say that they are coolies. Even the Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad Ji addressed them as coolies. They are not coolies, they are porters; call them by their names and do not call them coolies. They are talking about the facilities of the porters – they are going to recruit them and regularize them. But more than 40 per cent of them are over-aged. They are not in a position right now to get the railway jobs and that they would be regularized. They are over-aged. Even more than 20 per cent of them are illiterate; and they do not have even the primary education. This is the trick of the Railway Ministry and particularly the Railway Minister.

Now, I will come to the trains. Nothing is said about the suburban trains; nothing is said about the EMU coaches, the DMU coaches and about the MUMU coaches; no facilities have been given to the daily passengers. I am very much astonished to see that nothing has been allocated even for the on-going projects in the Railway Budget.

In the last Railway Budget, a second bridge was sanctioned on River Kosi, in my Constituency. But in this Budget, it is totally absent and nothing is mentioned. There are different on-going projects, but no allocation has been made for them. Most of the projects have been concentrated and located in Bihar. I am not against that and they should be upgraded. But this Minister is the Minister of Indian Railways. The Ministry should behave

[Shri Prabodh Panda]

in such a manner that the national character comes up and it is regulated. But this is absent. It is a very sad state of affairs.

I will talk about another thing. I happened to be a Member of the Consultative Committee on Railways. In the last Consultative Committee meeting, it was decided and promised by the Minister that Howrah Railway Station would be upgraded to that of international or global standards. It is quite surprising to me that in this Railway Budget there was no mention of it; and Patna has come in and Howrah has gone out. I am not against upgrading Patna Station, but why has Howrah been removed? Please incorporate it and try to elevate Howrah Station and make it on par with the international standards.

I now come to the doubling of lines. Shri Velu visited Kharagpur. More than 70 passenger trains, super fast trains and Rajdhani Express are plying there but no doubling has been done. A survey has already been done but there is no doubling of the line. So, I would request that from Kharagpur to Midnapore *via* Giri Maidan doubling should be done.

Coming to the Metro Rail, I would like to say that in Delhi the Metro Rail is being run, monitored and conducted by the Urban Development Department. Why the Kolkata Metro Rail is being run by the Metro Rail itself. If in Delhi it is being run by the Urban Development Department why not it be conducted by it in Kolkata and elsewhere? This is my demand.

There is no indication. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please complete your sentence and then conclude.

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Sir, he is the only speaker from our Party. Please give him time to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your recommendation is not required. He has already taken 15 minutes.

SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Sir, you have given time to several speakers why I am being denied? I seek your favour in this regard.

Coming to the amenities to the employees, I would like to say that most of the workers are staying in quarters but no construction work has been undertaken. The drainage system is in a very bad condition. ... *(Interruptions)* Even in General Budget there was some indication of the Sixth Pay Commission. But nothing is being mentioned about it in the Railway Budget. I do not know what would be the fate of the Railway employees after the presentation of the Sixth Pay Commission. Nothing is being said about it in the Railway Budget.

14.38 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

This is the first round of discussion. I do not know whether the Minister will respond to all the points made. I seek his intervention and hope that he will consider all these aspects. With these words I broadly support the Railway Budget and seek Railway Minister's intervention in this regard.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the next speaker I would like to say that I have a long list of 120 speakers with me. So, I would request the Members to speak only on their demands. Therefore, no one should speak for more than five minutes. That will be better and that will serve the purpose also. Otherwise, we will have to sit till tomorrow.

Secondly, I would also like to make a request that those hon. Members who wish to lay written speeches on the Table of the House they can do so.

I would now request Shri Rewati Raman Singh to look at the watch and speak only for five minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH (Allahabad): Hon. Deputy Speaker Sir, you have passed an order as soon as you came. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is not for you only but for all the hon. Members.

[Translation]

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: What for is this House? This House is for debate. If the Government is in such a hurry then the Government should get the railway Budget passed without debate. Sitting till late night makes no sense. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are wasting your own time.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Let us sit till late night. This House has been sitting till late night. This is not for the first time that I am requesting you.

[Translation]

If you expect us to finish within one day, why do you allow us to speak; do not allow at all.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are wasting your own time. What can I do?

... (Interruptions)

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: This is not correct.

[Translation]

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you have started speaking even before I could start. You have taken my time.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have taken your time or you have wasted it. I am just helping you.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: Sir, I extend my hearty congratulations to Shri Lalu Prasadji, the Minister of Railways. I am congratulating him because we have always seen the deficit Railway Budgets and the railways had to borrow from the General Budget. But since Lalu Prasad Ji has taken charge of the Railway Ministry, he has brought a revolutionary change. The railways had a profit of 20,000 crore rupees last year and this year the railways has a profit of 25,000 crores rupees and he deserves congratulations for this. He has executed several good works for the railways. He has given the railways a new direction. Today we can proudly say that the largest public sector organization of India has made a name for itself in the world. The economists from Harward, London School of Economics and IIMs have come to Shri Lalu Prasadji and asked him as to what he has done for the wonderful turnaround in the railways.

Sir, though the railways is progressing. I would like to point out the other aspects to the hon. Railway Minister. He must be listening, Rathwaji is sitting here, he may note it. Though you notes down, those notes remain in your note-book only and no action is taken thereon. I would like to request the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways that if he notes down anything, he should inform the Members regarding the action likely to be taken or no action. There are two Ministers of State in the Ministry of Railways but even then the Members are not informed.

Sir, today the trains are the only means of travelling for the general public. A person prefers the railways for going anywhere provided he gets the required facilities. If you see the general coaches of the trains going to Punjab, Mumbai, Kolkata and other places from Bihar, you will find those coaches overcrowded. People do not get enough space for sitting in those coaches.

Sir, there should be such an arrangement that the general public for whom the UPA Government always speaks, also may get some facilities. Today, the general public is the most troubled lot. It world be better you increase the fare by two rupees but ensure that the facilities for the public are also increased. Even today a member of the public travels as an unfortunate man and he does not get even a seat. Few days ago I had gone to Balia from Delhi. I had taken Tinsukhia Superfast Express and the coaches were overcrowded as the people were standing even at the gates of the toilets. A big drum was kept in the toilet. I called the T.T.E. and asked him as to how this drum has been kept in the toilet. He told me that he did not know and any passenger might have put the drum there. I told him that he would not know if anybody plants a bomb as a big drum was put there. When he came to know that I was a Member of Parliament, he got that drum removed.

Hon. Rathwaji, look at the position of the railways all over the world, then compare the position of Indian railways to that and only then you will know where our railways stands. Despite all done, there is much scope for improvement in the railways. Korea and China are our neighbouring countries. I will tell you the names of other countries where the trains run at 350, 400 and 500 kilometres per hour.

Sir, I remember that in 1967 when the Rajdhani train was introduced, its speed was 130 kilometres per hour. But as a matter of fact even today the superfast trains run at a speed of only 45 to 50 kilometres per hour. You take superfast charge from the passengers but it is a gross injustice to them.

Any person paying the superfast charges expects to reach his destination earlier. But he reaches his destination

[Shri Rewati Raman Singh]

at a speed of 15-50 kilometres per hour. In America and Europe, the bullet trains run at a speed of 500 to 550 kilometres per hour. I had been to France. In France the trains run at 350 to 450 kilometres per hour.

I would like to tell the hon. Minister the names of a few trains. Shinkansen of Japan covers 552 kilometres in an hour. TGB of France runs at a speed of 515 kilometres per hour. Eurostar runs at a speed of 330 kilometres per hour. The speed of ICE of Germany is 330 kilometres per hour. Spanish Talgo runs at a speed of 350 kilometres per hour. I had spoken on railway Budget two years ago. I had made requests at that time also but I got no response. You know what a great convenience metro has been to the public. Whom are you competing with? You have been competing with aeroplanes. ... *(Interruptions).* Anyone, who can afford, wants to travel by train at a faster speed. Whenever we come from Lucknow or Allahabad, the trains are often late. The distance of Delhi from Gaziabad is only 25 kilometres but the mail train covers this distance in one and a half hour. We had seen multi-storeyed stations and railway lines in Japan, Malaysia and many other countries. Several trains were coming to the station at the same time from different directions. Why do you not make that kind of arrangement? If a train takes so much time in reaching Delhi from Gaziabad, how can that train be superfast. You should look into the reasons behind this. ... *(Interruptions)*

Please give me five minutes more. I shall conclude within five minutes. I am just giving my suggestions. The world has entered the 21st century. We are also living in the 21st century. We know that the rail tracks have not been upgraded for a long time. A stretch of 500 kilometres from Delhi to Allahabad on Delhi-Howrah route can be upgraded at one time and the other stretch from Allahabad to Howrah can be upgraded in second phase. If you do not have funds for the upgradation of the rail tracks, I request you to issue railway bonds for this purpose. By issuing bonds, upgrade 500 kilometres in a year and the total stretch to Howrah may be completed within two years. If the tracks to Mumbai, Tamilnadu are also upgraded similarly, it will be a revolution in the country and the railways will create a new name for itself.

I would like to make some points about my constituency because he is in a hurry. What kind of food is served in railways? Its standard is same as was fifty years ago. Cleanliness is not maintained, dusty food is seved. Why it is not served in hot-cases? If one needs breakfast, only omlet and breads are served from pantry car and no other items. Vada and idli should also be prepared and served. ... *(Interruptions).* Let me give suggestions. I am giving only suggestions. ... *(Interruptions)* and if you do not need I won't ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have spoken for ten minutes.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH: You realize it. If you don't realize what I say then you should say so. I want improvement in food being served. The food should be nutritious. The diet should be changed. See the shabby condition of toilets at stations. We are going to hold commonwealth games, see the toilets of stations around Delhi. The toilets are stinking, what impression the people who come to see the games, will have about it.

Sir, I would like to urge the hon. Ministers to kindly double the railway line between Rai Bareily and Allahabad. Similarly, if Allahabad-Banaras line is also doubled it would facilitate several trains reach Delhi via Banaras, Allahabad and Lucknow on schedule.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you have repeatedly asked me to conclude, therefore, I would make a mention of 2-3 more trains. Allahabad is an important city and it played a prominent role in our freedom. I have requested Shri Laluji many a times for starting a Shatabdi train from here. But he has not obliged so far. I again demand for a Shatabdi train from here, one train to Bangalore and one to Mumbai other than Mumbai Mail and also a fast train to Mumbai so that thousands of passengers from U.P., especially Allahabad could conveniently travel to Mumbai.

At the same time, I would like to say that, Chhapra is Laluji's home district. Let him start a train from Chhapra to Allahabad. People have been demanding that it should run via Balia. If he fulfils my demands, I would be highly grateful to him.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Vijoy Krishnaji, conclude your speech in five minutes.

SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA (Barh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you allot time to the Members. You may find out that adequate time is left for my party.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Laluji has presented Railway Budget and he has been doing so for the last many years. Earlier, also it used to be presented. As Rewati Babu has said, used to expect something from General Budget, but this time Railway Budget has set an example before the for General Budget. A historical person has presented a historical Budget. And he has done so for last many years. The common man and the poor as well have been taken care of in this Budget. Railway is a base of cultural integrity of our country. Through this Budget, efforts have been made to expand the rail network in North-East, Jammu and Kashmir and other areas where it had no lines earlier. Some major steps have been taken in this Budget which were discussed here. The concession to senior women has been increased from 30 per cent to 50 per cent and free monthly season ticket for girl-students upto twelfth standard.

Sir, I would like to make a mention of historical decision of the hon. Minister about giving 50 per cent concession in tickets to AIDS patients. AIDS patients are very helpless and they have to fight odds so far as their social life is concerned so I would urge the hon. Minister and the House that their ticket should be made totally free. He has taken very good steps with regard to coolies, my some colleagues have called them porters. The coolies throughout the country have cheered this decision. Shri Vir Bhadra Yaji, a freedom fighter of my constituency, was, the president of freedom fighter's organization. He worked for solidarity of coolies and porters throughout the country. Though he is not alive today, but he left the memories of his struggle. I have been knowing Shri Laluji closely for the last 30-40 years. He has done a great job in favour of coolies.

The decision to allow Urdu as a medium for recruitment examination in railways reflects the ideology of UPA Government towards the minorities and the poor. This decision has helped those who had been waiting for it for long, especially Madrasa educated youths. Many other important decisions have been taken in this Budget. The decision of manning of unmanned railway level crossing is also a very good decision. If the State Governments also spend some funds on it this job can be proceeded further. It has been resolved to do so in this Budget. I welcome the decision of the Government for taking over Mokama based Bharat Wagon Factory, Muzaffarpur based rail factory, an enterprise of Ministry of Heavy Industries. Thousands of employees of these factories were not being paid their salary. None of the previous railway Ministers, though a Member representing this area also was the Minister once, had the courage to take such a bold decision of taking over Bharat Wagon Factory. This decision saved 900 employees who were on the brink of starvation. I urge the hon. Minister to modernize rail wagon factories. The Minister has decided to modernize other rail coach factories, I would urge the hon. Minister to take up Mokama based factory also for modernization.

Sir, through you, I would like to draw attention of the hon. Minister to certain demands. Hundreds of acres of land and of railways, lying vacant in Gadhra in Bihar is being encroached upon. Gadhra yard is located in proximity of an industrial centre near Barauni. Railways is setting up large industries. The land of Gadhra yard should be utilized for this purpose, I demand for a third line between Patna, Kiul and Buxar as large number of daily passengers travel on this route. Often they board express train causing inconvenience to long distance passengers and as daily passengers find it difficult to reach their destination in time, they board express train. In view of excessive traffic load, I demand for laying of third line between Buxar and Patna. Barh, a proposed district and a historical place is headquarters of my parliamentary constituency. I demand for two ROBs in Barh, one near the Court and another near the city connecting national highway 30A, it would provide access to NH-31 and NH-30A and connectivity to several districts of Bihar like Patna and Nalanda.

Sir, you visited Patna Sahib yesterday. I welcome the proposal for modernization and extension of the Patna Station. Fatuha-Islampur railway line, which runs parallel to it, should be extended upto Bodhgaya. Hon. Minister has also given an assurance for it. With the construction of this link, the people of Fatuha will get connected with Bodhgaya which is a world famous historical site. Similarly, the goods godowns at Mokama also need to be extended. The work relating to maintenance and cleaning of trains was done there earlier but this work has now been shifted to Rajgir. Arrangements should be made for maintenance and cleaning of trains at Mokama also in addition to the arrangements already made at Rajgir. Many trains run from Patna which should be extended upto Mokama, particularly the Sampoorna Kranti Express and

[Shri Vijoy Krishna]

Jansadharan Express should be run from Mokama and for this, maintenance arrangements should be made there. Barh and Fatuha stations should be upgraded to model stations. Praful Chaki a prominent leader of freedom struggle was involved in throwing bombs during the struggle on the Mujaffarpur incident Khudi Ram Bose was given death sentence.

15.00 hrs.

Perhaps you may also be aware that Praful Chaki, who was important freedom fighter, had achieved martyrdom at Mokama station. The people of Mokama have high hopes that a small piece of land should be allotted there so that his statue could be put up there. Hon. Railway Minister has also given assurance for this but there are legal problems. A statue of Bapuji has been installed recently. I demand that Praful Chaki's statue should be installed in Mokama.

The factory at Harnaud is a very important factory. It is being developed at a very slow pace. A new railway line was approved from Nyora to Bihar Sharif. Earlier, money was not provided for it but it has been allotted this time. But, the State Government and the district administration have not been able to acquire land. We are also trying to get this work done. I demand for early completion of this work in the Central Bihar.

I thank the hon. Railway Minister very much that he has presented a very good Railway Budget. With this, I conclude.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are discussing the Railway Budget for 2008-09. The Railways have definitely faced difficulties in discharging their responsibilities in view of the increasing population of the country and increase in the passenger load of the Railways. Before I start, I want to draw your attention to the critical remarks made and praise and opposition shown for the Railway Budget. Hon. Railway Minister has, in his budget, made announcements to introduce some new trains, lay new railway-lines and build new railway stations of international standards. But, I would like to tell the apprehensions of the economists as to how and from where the funds would be mobilised for all these works. One of the apprehensions expressed has been about the upgradation of the Railways which includes the railway tracks, signalling system and infrastructure for which billions of rupees are proposed to be spent. But, even that will not be enough. The existing signalling system is a cause of concern and it results in insecurity due to which trains do not reach on time and many trains do not even start. Many a times accidents also occur.

Dedicated Freight Corridor of Railways has been discussed here quite a lot. It is being discussed since 2005 but instead of going forward, this scheme is going backwards. There are 300 railway schemes which have been stuck up for years. Promises were made for railway infrastructure but were not fulfilled. Similarly, the railway bridges are not in good condition and their maintenance is also not good. We make many announcements but these are not implemented which is very much necessary.

Some announcements were made in the last Railway Budget also. One of them was to upgrade some stations to model stations. But, it is not known how many stations have so far been developed as model strtion. Similarly, he had announced many new trains but as per my information not even 40% of such trains have been introduced. You are promising the world to the people only by making announcements which is not proper. You should also implement those announcements.

Long ago, Railways had proposed a uniform railway track system, uni gauge system throughout the country. This work is going on very slowly. Hon. Minister should tell as to why this work is going on at slow pace? The speed of railway traffic will increase and Railways will become more useful if this work is completed soon.

Without going into further details in this regard, I want to put some points before you in brief. Definitely, there is a need for improvement in the functioning of the Railways, like doubling of railway lines or electrification or changes in the coaches and wagons. If this work is completed in a time bound manner, then the Railway Budget would be truly praiseworthy. Otherwise, calling it a magic budget or miracle will not help.

People of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and South India have said that they have not got any thing from this Railway Budget. In all, no region is satisfied. The whole country can not be satisfied just by catering to some particular regions. Discussion on Punjab also took place but I do not want to repeat it. I only want to ask whether we want to maintain a regional balance or not. If not, then the railway budget will lose its charm. I would like that you think from this point of view and work on it more efficiently.

What is the situation in trains today? Women are robbed and raped, passengers are thrown off the railway coaches. What are the security arrangements in trains? You should also see where you stand in this regard. You are increasing the number of coaches upto 25 but people fall down when the trains stop at stations as they have no facility to alight. Therefore, there is need to increase the infrastructure, like extension of platforms along with an increase in the number of coaches.

Will the Railway Minister draw a clear outline about what has been written by the Rajasthan Patrika from the Cleanliness and security point of view? Incidents of rape with women train passengers in Mumbai suburban trains, increasing incidents of theft, throwing out the passengers from moving trains are being reported in the Patrika. Even then, if we say that the rail budget is very good, then what could be said about it? In this regard, Jansatta has written as to why the incidents of rape, abduction, theft and throwing of passengers from moving trains are taking place? There is a need to think over these things seriously. Only then we can fulfil our social duty.

Now, I would like to say something about Madhya Pradesh. For Madhya Pradesh, only one or two trains have been introduced from here. At the time when hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways visited Ratlam along with hon. Railway Minister, the work of gauge conversion between Ratlam and Neemach section had taken place and after which you had said that some new trains would be introduced from there but only two or three new trains have been introduced so far and there is a need to run some more trains. Hon. Rathwaji, you may consider it yourself that lakhs of people in the country and from abroad too visit the holy place of Jawar to offer their prayers and a stoppage was to be provided at this station but even after making an announcement from your side, no stoppage was provided over there. We feel sad when the announcements made by you are not translated into action even after six months, why you have been announcing schemes for self-praise and taking credit for the same. I would like to urge that a stoppage should be provided immediately over there and the number of trains between Ajmer and Ratlam should be increased so that we can have direct connectivity with Southern India.

At that time, it was publicly announced by you that gauge conversion between Ratlam to Akola will be completed very soon but how much funds he has allocated for gauge conversion and how much time will be taken to complete the said work with the said funds? How the utility of this rail section be established as long as this is not extended further from Ratlam to Akola. There is a need to increase the amount of funds for the said rail section.

The meetings of ZRUCC and DRUCC do not take place on time. I would urge upon him to first discuss this issue with the representatives of that area before chalking out the time table so that it can be viewed from this point of view as to which train shall be suitable and if no attention is paid towards this, later on demand is made to change the Time-table.

Survey has been completed between Ujjain and Ramganj mandi but after that no work is taking place. There has been a demand for this line for last 10 years. What is the status of that demand? You have said that even the survey has not been carried out for the Badi-Sadhadi-Neemach route. I would request you to please consider this. I have been hearing about Indore-Dahod rail line since the last 25-30 years, ever since I came to the Parliament. Hon. Prime Minister had gone to Megh Nagar, Jhabua and made an announcement that a railway line would be laid there and Bhoomi Poojan was also done over there. This thing was going on for the last 30-35 years and it could have been completed by now but it was not done.

Similarly, there is a need to provide a halt for the trains running at present. Bhopal-Ratlam Intercity should be extended upto Chittor. Sathali-Jaipur-Kota-Shyamgarh passenger train should be extended upto Ratlam. For Indore-Jodhpur train should have stoppage at Suvasara. Jammu-Tawi superfast train should be given a stoppage at Shyamgarh. Indore-Nizamuddin Intercity should be provided a stoppage at Garoth station. One more train should be introduced between Indore-Ratlam-Chittor. Similarly, the Ajmer-Bandra train should be run for seven days instead of three days a week. The Ajmer-Bandra train should be run seven days a week instead of three days. The proposed train for Indore-Ajmer should be run via Ujjain-Nagada-Ratlam-Mandsaur-Neemach. Udaipur-Ajmer Chetak Express which was announced in the Rail budget should be extended upto Ratlam. Additional coaches should be attached to the trains being run on this section. A foot-over-bridge should be constructed at Jawara-Mandsaur railway line. With these words, I would like to lay the remaining speech on the Table of the House.

[Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey]

*The proposed passenger train for Indore-Ajmer should be run via Ujjain-Nagada-Ratlam-Mandsaur-Neemach. The schedule for the trains should be chalked out in such a manner that the passengers can easily board connecting trains for further destinations. Expansion of sheds at the Jawara-Mandsaur platform should be done and three should be appropriate restroom facility.

Although there are several other public interest matters pertaining to railways but due to time constraint it is not possible to mention about all of them. I will present that demand separately and would also like to urge that timely disposal of various problems faced by the railway employees and their families is also necessary.

I hope that you will consider these things seriously.*

SARDAR SUKHDEO SINGH LIBRA (Ropar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways for having presented a surplus budget. In this regard, I would like to say that earning profit is a separate thing, what is important is to provide facilities to the people. There has been a demand for constitution of a committee but persons sitting in air-conditioned rooms backward will become members of this committee. My first suggestion is that each station should have a committee comprising members of local people and suggestions of the members should be forwarded to the Government then only the people will get better facilities. The Government has decided to construct a freight corridor from Kolkata to Ludhiana. The Government of Punjab has appealed, and I also demand that it may be extended upto Atari. If not upto Atari, it should be extended at least upto Amritsar, with this move we can strengthen our relations with Pakistan and it would be beneficial for Punjab and the country as whole.

Sir, railway works are executed at a very slow pace and consequently, many works remain incomplete. An under bridge is to be constructed in Govindgarh. The municipal committee has to bear its expenditure, whereas the Ministry says that it is not being constructed because of impending corridor and some times they say that its plan is yet to be approved. My submission is that the works meant for convenience of the public should be undertaken expeditiously. The work of inviting tenders for an over bridge at Khanna on Litheri-Chandigarh Road has been completed but further work has not been started so far. Therefore, my submission is that it should be expeditiously taken up.

Sir, I want one more facility in railways, majority of the railway stations were constructed about 50 years ago but their condition still remains same. The labourers from other States come to the station and they are a source of revenue for the railways, whereas, the railways have not provided any facility for them not even sheds. There is no shed to protect them from sunshine. Therefore, I urge for construction of sheds at each station.

Sir, I want to make a point about Ludhiana station. Sir, you as well as I board the train from Ludhiana station. There is a large park outside the station, but unfortunately it has no toilet. It puts the people at a great inconvenience. A toilet should be constructed there. Announcement regarding upgradation of Sirhind station and provision of border was made two years back. It was said that it would be developed as model station but no work has been done in this regard so far. There is a need to take up the said work. The work of ticket booking at Sirhind station was awarded to a private person, but the staff did not allow him to work there. He was being paid one rupee per ticket. The employees appealed to the Government to stop sale of tickets by private persons because it was harming their interest as they were making money under the table through sale of tickets. Therefore, there is a need to check this also.

Sir, CRPF harasses migrant labourers, even some times it loots them. There is a need to check them also.

Sir, my submission is that some work should be set aside for SCs and STs in railways. The big contractors are awarded entire work at the stations and they do not get any work. The Government should see to it that they also get some work there. Janata Food, which is available in Delhi, should also be made available in other cities like Ludhiana, Jallandhar and Amritsar so that people may get cheaper food.

Lastly, I would like to make one more submission. Many Members are yet to speak and I am a disciplined Member. You as well as I go to Delhi station. There was a VIP gate, which has been closed for long. When the reason is asked for its closure, no convincing reply is given. I think perhaps it has been closed for security reasons. We are also responsible for it. People known to us are granted entry therein, consequently it gets congested. I urge that this VIP gate should be reopened.

I along with the people of Sirhind have been demanding for the last 2-3 years for stoppage of two

.... This part of the Speech was laid on the Table.

trains namely Malwa Express and Shan-e-Punjab at Sirhind as there is no day train at present. Therefore, a stoppage of these two trains should be provided there immediately.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Where should the stoppage be provided?

SARDAR SUKHDEO SINGH LIBRA: At Sirhind, Sir.

*SHRI JAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL (Beed): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given me an opportunity to speak. Large number of facilities have been provided in this budget. Senior citizens, women, students all have been taken care of in this budget. Convenient regular trains have been announced. Assurance has been given to improve catering in railways. The profit of railways has surged to Rs. 25 thousand crore. Announcement regarding Class IV and Class III jobs to the porters etc. are some of the praiseworthy steps.

Sir, hon. Railway Minister has presented a very good budget to the nation but only a token provision of Rs. 10 crore has been made for Ahmedabad, Beed, Parli (W) rail line. It is very humiliating for the people of my constituency. By making such a meagre allocation the hon. Minister of Railways has crushed the sentiments of people of my constituency. The public is greatly anguished at it.

Sir, the demand for Ahmedabad-Beed-Parli (W) line is very old. The said rail line was ahnounced in 1995-96 Budget and it was cleared in February, 1997. None of the Railway Ministers paid attention to it. From the year 1995-96 to 2008-09 a provision of approximately Rs. 103.75 crore has been made for the said line, whereas an expenditure of Rs. 16.06 crore has been made so far. Non-utilisation of remaining amount and its diversion is a matter of serious concern.

Sir, if the Ministry of Railways desired, the construction of godowns on new rail lines, staff quarters and construction of bridge could have been completed. Because of lack of will power of the Ministry and indecision of the hon. Minister the entire work has come to a halt and it is not progressing.

Sir, the cost of the said line has escalated during last 12 years. Its revised cost estimate is pending for approval in the Railway Ministry. The hon. Minister is not granting approval. The land of approximately 100 villages of Beed district has been acquired but the compensation has not been paid so far.

Sir, what is the reason behind no progress of work of the said railway line. The Ministry has not taken interest. Will the work go on at this speed?

Sir, often it is said that the said rail line will not be viable. Through you, I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether all the projects sanctioned for Bihar in this budget are economically viable? The fact is that they are not. Whether he has any enmity with my constituency or with Maharashtra? What kind of revenge it is? Laluji, you are the Railway Minister of India and not of Bihar. All Indians are contributing to railways' progress, not just Bhiar.

Sir, all kind of efforts have been made for completing the Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli railway line. In October 2007, a month long protest took place in which nearly 5000 people from all religions, sects, groups, social organisations, farmers, youth, journalists and Aathra Paggad community people participated. On 28th October, when this agitation was called off, trains were stopped at Parli, Ghatanadur and Pangaon stations in which I was myself arrested by the Police and released in the evening. Nearly 850 workers got themselves arrested at these three stations.

Sir, what other kind of agitation is being expected by hon. Railway Minister and the Ministry? This line is being intentionally neglected by hon. Railway Minister and the Railway Ministry. They are acting arbitrarily. There is nobody to convince them. They are in a situation in which...

"Khud hi muddai, khud he mudailya,
Janab khud he judge, faisla dene wale."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Railway Ministry has become private property of hon. Laluji. He can run a train anywhere without considering the fact that it might cause inconvenience to anybody. Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Laluji is doing injustice to us. He is playing with our emotions. He should at least show a little sensitivity towards the public sentiments. I would like to tell him that...

"Mat sataao garib ko, garib ro dega.
Gar Sunega Khuda, Jad se ukhad dega."

I would request hon. Railway Minister to at least have fear of God.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Jaysingrao Gaikwad Patil]

Sir, I would urge upon you to kindly instruct hon. Railway Minister to increase the proposed amount to be provided under the Rail Budget 2008-09 from Rs. 10 crore to Rs. 100 crore for the Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli railway line. The proposal regarding land must be given approval urgently. Not only this much, the proposed fund of Rs. 93.75 crore till date and the increased amount likely to be allocated today, both should be spent by March, 2009 and the time limit for completing this project should also be fixed. Along with this, a provision of Rs. 50 crore should be made for laying a railway line between Ghatnadur-Amabajogai. With this I conclude my speech.

[English]

DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak in support of the Railway Budget presented by Shri Lalu Prasad Yadavji, our hon. Railway Minister, on 26th February 2008 in this august House.

I must place on record deep appreciation for the spectacular achievement - which has been right in front of all of us - of 14 lakh Railway employees under the able leadership of Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and his Ministers, Shri Naranbhai Rathwa ji and Shri R. Veluji.

Under the leadership of Dr. Manmohan Singhji, our hon. Prime Minister, and UPA Chairperson, Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, this is the fifth Rail Budget in the row in which there is no increase in the fares. On the contrary, fares have been reduced. He has created history by generating cash surplus of Rs. 25,000 crore, as against Rs. 20,000 crore which was there in the previous year. By managing his freight business, by keeping his far-sighted and innovative approach as his guiding principle, he has been able to achieve astonishing results. As a result, he has turned Railways into a unique mega enterprise by turning this organization into the profit-earning organization of the country. Not only the country but also the world has appreciated this.

Sir, this Budget is pro-poor. It is for the first time that porters who have been lugging the luggage of our passengers have a ray of hope of becoming Gangmen by filling thousands of vacant posts. Those Gangmen will be upgraded to work as Gatemen. This is really done, I think, keeping in mind the poorer sections of society, those poor people. He has been able to look after them. This is a remarkable step indeed.

I think it is a popular Budget because the students or youth, our senior citizens, lady senior citizens, our brave decorated awardees like Ashok Chakra, Param Vir Chakra, Mahavir Chakra, and AIDS affected persons have been included. Not only that, he has included Mother-Child Health Express also.

Sir, this innovative and popular Budget has many facilities for passengers like online booking, making Railway Enquiry Call Centre passenger friendly, online Indication Display Board, and most important I could see is provision of Green Toilets for the passenger. Introduction of Garib Raths have added to the passenger comfort for the *"Aam Aadmi"*. New Stainless Steel Coaches in Mail and Express trains are being provided, which would act for all the comforts to make rail travel pleasant and comfortable.

The hon. Railway Minister has also said that it is going to be very secure and safe for us. I am grateful to the Railway Minister that he has included two projects for the State of Himachal Pradesh – Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri and also the survey of Baddi-Barotiwala-Nangal. But I would like to submit here in this august House that somehow Himachal Pradesh, since Independence, has always been neglected in this regard. Our country is a country of diverse culture. The aim of the Railways is also to integrate the hilly backward zones and bring them together in the mainstream. I wish to emphasize here that the rail network for Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand should be a very well integrated approach considering its geo-strategic location as also its hydro-electric and tourism potential along with horticulture, floriculture and agriculture market needs today.

Sir, we are thinking of Trans-Asian Railway by linking China in the East and Bulgaria in the West, and I am sure that the northern parts of our country may be given due importance.

Sir, I would like to make a few suggestions in respect of my constituency in particular. I would like to remind Lalu ji that during his tour to the State Capital of Himachal Pradesh, he was approached by a delegation from Paonta Sahib.

[Translation]

The way Anandpur Saheb in Punjab and Nanded in Maharashtra have been connected, Paonta Saheb should also be connected in a similar manner. This is not only

a pilgrimage, but it is a major pilgrimage route, which is used by a large number of devotees. According to an estimate, each year approximately 25 to 30 lakh passengers take this route for visiting Haridwar, Kedarnath, Badrinath and Hemkund Saheb. The people of Himachal Pradesh would be very grateful if this route is connected the way Anandpur Saheb and Nanded have been connected. Along with this, I would like to urge upon him to include this in the survey while making his speech. This is a humble request of mine and the people of Paonta will always remain indebted to him.

Sir, there is a need to connect the entire Shivalik region with railways. If Baddi in Kalamb, Barotiwala and Nangal regions are connected with railways then it will bring employment opportunities for the unemployed youth there and shall also promote the industrial sector. A lot of industries have been set up there but we do not have rail facility. Therefore, it is my request that it should be done. Other than this, I would like to make a demand for a new railway line from Parvanu to Daralaghat and Nangal area.

[English]

In my constituency, the Asia's biggest cement plant, Ambuja Cements Ltd. has come for quite some time. The recent entry is that of J.P. Group of Industries. This is a very important proposal.

[Translation]

You have gifted two things to Himachal Pradesh and I believe that you will also fulfil the two demands presented by us regarding our constituency.

[English]

People from Ambuja Cements Ltd., J.P. Industries and others can also put in their money out of their kitty, if they are approached. They are very keen. If the Railways go there, they will also be able to contribute for the opening of a new railway line and for bearing the cost of rail survey.

Finally, Sir, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to order implementation of already planned and approved projects. I would also request the hon. Railway Minister to institute Rail Board so that Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri railway line is implemented at the fastest pace. If the Board of your own is constituted, it will be faster. As it is, Himachal Pradesh has already given some percentage and also extended cooperation in this project. This is my final request.

With these words, Sir, I once again support this Railway Budget which is very innovative, very pro-poor and forward looking, and, I think, this is one of the best budgets presented in recent years.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' (Begusarai): Sir, I have very attentively listened to the Rail Budget presented by hon. Railway Minister and two-three poems that were read out by him during the budget gave an impression that he was patting his own back. When he was not satisfied with that, he went ahead and sought appreciation of hon. Prime Minister while he was giving a speech on President's Address.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Rail Budget presented by Hon. Railway Minister is completely a jugglery of figures. It is all a myth. Sethi ji is saying that there is no reality in this anywhere. If there was a surplus of Rs. 25 thousand crore then the same should have been mentioned in the rail budget speech as to how much investible surplus is there. How much money is he investing into that? Instead of that, he is asking for budgetary support from the Government and saying that there is a surplus of Rs. 25 thousand crores. This is a complete lack of vision on his part and this budget can be called directionless. If the national growth rate is at 8.5 to 9 percent then the growth rate of railways should be two percent higher than that. Whereas he is telling that the growth rate of railways is at 7.5 to 8 percent and then he is claiming that he is taking railways to new heights.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will not take much time. I would only want hon. Railway Minister to explain fact-wise, these seven-eight points which I am raising here. During his replies to rail budget speech. Then he would know as to what is the truth. Hon. Railway Minister has stated in his speech that payments of dividend were not being made during the tenure of NDA Government and that he has started it. I think he has not read the rail budget speech of the year 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2004 and has straight away given this speech. Payment of railway dividend was started from the year 2002 and each year the same has kept on increasing. The Finance Ministry at that time opposed it and advised the Railway Ministry not to disburse the dividend. But the Railway department ignored this advice and started paying dividend from the year 2002. You are saying that you are paying the dividend and taking the railways to new heights. I have relevant figures to show as to how much dividend was paid in respective year; I have also read the Rail Budget speech. I would not like to take the valuable time

[Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan']

of the House and if you ask me I can lay the figures on the Table of the House. In the Rail Budget speech he has mentioned that he is going to reduce the train fares. He is going to reduce the train fares, when new coaches would be added in which the number of berths would be increased. We have heard the Chairman of Railway Board saying on television that these new bogies would be received by the year 2016. In that manner you are presenting the rail budget of the year 2016. He must be joking.

He is talking about passenger amenities but increasing the number of berths from 72 to 86 in a coach would adversely impact the passenger amenities, as there would be lesser space in the trains. Passenger amenities have been down graded, so by reducing the fare he has not obliged the people in any way. He has stated in his budget speech that new trains would be introduced but at several points he has mentioned that these would be introduced only after laying of new lines and undertaking gauge conversion. That means he is taking into account the gauge conversion to be done in the next 10 years. It is ridiculous. Railway Safety Fund of Rs. 17 thousand crore was constituted during the regime of NDA Government. He must clarify as to how much of this fund was spent during the tenure of NDA Government and thereafter. The credit for reduction in number of accidents goes to the Government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee as it was his Government that this fund with a corpus of seventeen thousand crores was constituted. It is not a result of better management of Railway Minister. He should not pat his back for the performance of someone else. In September-October, 2006, hon. Prime Minister had laid the foundation stone in Ludhiana under the dedicated freight corridor scheme. He must explain the value of work done under it. Besides, Bihar has been mentioned a lot. Defamatory statements have been given against Bihar that most of the schemes in the Budget have been given to it. He must explain as to how much funds have been sanctioned for each scheme. On paper he has shown allocation of 5 lakhs, 20 lakhs or 50 lakhs under various schemes. He should state the progress of the railway bridge on river Kosi started during the tenure of NDA Government. If he has courage and dedication for the development of Bihar, he must state the progress of this bridge.

Besides, there is a big jugglery of figures in the Budget. In January, he made the provision that the reservation can be availed 90 days in advance. The amount of reservation collected during February and March for the months of April, May and June has been shown as profit for current year. But this amount should come under next year's profit. Reservations made for April is a profit for the year 2009-10 and should not be shown against current year's profit. He has taken this entire amount into the current budgetary figures and has shown a profit of Rs. 25 thousand crore. He must explain as to how much post retirement benefits are to be given out of this surplus amount of 25 thousand crores. How much is to be given for the retiring employees? He is trying to mislead the country with such a jugglery of figures. For 15 years he has disillusioned the Bihar and now misleading the entire country. Please do not do such acts, which may ruin the country's administration. I would, therefore, like that the hon. Minister while replying should clarify the 7-8 points, which I have raised so that people of the country may be apprised of it. Thank you for giving me an opportunity.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would like to repeat my request that the hon. Members who want to submit their written speeches, can lay them on the Table of the House.

*SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL (Mehsana): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister of Railways has presented a popular budget consecutively for the fifth time. It is an achievement. The budget seeks to provide concession to all sections of the society, however, only a few States would be benefited by them. My home State Gujarat has not been given anything substantial in this budget. Most of the railway lines of Western Railways passes through Gujarat but its zonal office has not been shifted to Gujarat till now. There is widespread resentment among the people of Gujarat due to this. I do not know why Gujarat is being discriminated against by Railways though the new railway lines started in Gujarat are earning profits. There are some old meter gauge lines were there is scope for work. These lines were earning profit after Independence and their upgradation would no doubt accrue benefits to the Railways as well people of Gujarat.

Salt is transported to other States from northern Gujarat but traders are suffering huge losses, as goods trains are not made available in time. Therefore, more goods trains should be made available from North Gujarat for the transportation of salt. 40 million tones of cargo is transported to Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and other States from Kandla port making optimum use of the railway routes through which it is transported. Therefore, a railway line between Ahmedabad, Udaipur, Chittorgarh and Delhi should be constructed for the speedy transportation of cargo. A railway line from Delhi to

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Udaipur has already been constructed. Besides, the conversion of meter gauge line between Ahmedabad and Udaipur into broad gauge would facilitate the transportation of cargo to North India's States. This would also increase the accessibility to tourist spots of northern Gujarat. This part of the Gujarat has a number of religious places for which people all over the country have great reverence.

There is a mention in this budget that now traders will get the facility to book items at their doorstep. Earlier traders were required to see the agents repeatedly along with their goods for booking at railway stations. They were facing many difficulties in getting the goods released. The decision taken by the hon. Minister of Railways to provide booking facility at the doorstep of traders is a big relief for them.

Often the trains get dirty during long journeys creating troubles for the passengers. Now the decision of on board cleaning of trains would provide a relief to the passengers. Besides, arrangements should be made to clean the stations as the uncleaned tracks create problems for the people.

A broad gauge line goes from my parliamentary constituency Mehsana to Ahmedabad but there is no meter gauge line between Taranga Hills and Ambaji which could be converted into broad gauge and merged into Ahmedabad–Mehsana line. Such a move would provide accessibility to various pilgrim centres and tourist spots of this area and would earn an additional income for railways. Moreover, the rural people inhabitated between Taranga Hills and Ambaji would be able to use the modern railway facilities.

The pilgrim centre 'Kherabrahma' in my parliamentary constituency is famous all over the country. Lakhs of people from other States visit this centre and a large number of people have devotion for Ambaji also. However, there is no railway line between Ahmedabad and Ambaji via Kherabrahma which is being demanded for the last many decades. Therefore, through this House, I request the hon. Minister of Railways to include the proposal regarding new railway line between Ahmedabad, Kherabrahma and Ambaji in this budget. Similarly, there is no railway line between Harji and Radhanpur areas of my parliamentary constituency causing inconvenience to the people of these areas. Poor people are living here and the construction of this railway line can help in removing the backwardness of this area.

Freight rates for petroleum products have been reduced in this budget which would help in checking the price rise. Approx. 30-40% of the oil and gas is extracted from my parliamentary constituency Mehsana. It would be better if the Government implements the scheme to transport it to other parts of the country. For this purpose lines using state-of-the-art technology should be constructed.

With this, I express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister and Shrimati Soniaji for contributing in making of a very good budget. Along with it, I request that its benefits should be extended to all States including Gujarat.

*SHRI V.K. THUMMAR (Amreli): Sir, hon. Railway Minister has broken many records while presenting this budget and has presented a popular budget. The income from passengers has increased by 14% this year which is a record and history has been made by getting 21 per cent return on capital by making optimum use of the Railway property. A record profit of Rs. 25,000 crore has been earned by giving 2% to 5% concession in fares and an annual plan of Rs. 37,500 crore has been prepared for 2008-09 which is the highest so far and a record also. The target for the transportation of goods was 850 million tonnes was not only achieved but was surpassed thus creating a fresh record. Transportation charges have been reduced for petroleum products alongwith 2 to 5 per cent reduction in passenger fares. My parliamentary constituency Amreli falls in Saurashtra in Gujarat for which nothing has been given in this budget which is also a record. But, I feel very sorry for this record. What is the sin of the people of Saurashtra that they do not have a direct train service for Delhi and Mumbai even after 60 years and they have to change many trains for longer journeys which results in wastage of time and inconvenience to people.

All the States, and not just a few States, have contributed to the profit earned by the Railways today. The projects announced in the budget are for some States only and there is discrimination against Gujarat in this budget which is not proper from economic and social point of view. Some States are opposing this budget even though many concessions have been announced in it and the only reason for it is that those States have got nothing in this budget.

The railway line linking my parliamentary constituency Amreli is a metre-guage line between Jetalsar and Dhasa from where many commercial activities are going on and

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri V.K. Thummar]

also the Pipavav port is also nearby and because of this it is necessary to convert this metre-gauge line into broad-gauge line. Many new trains can also be introduced from many parts of Saurashtra to other remote areas of the country after the conversion of this line into broad gauge. The people of Saurashtra will not get the facility of the modern railway services until this line is converted into broad gauge. I have requested the hon. Railway Minister many a time in this regard. Hon. Minister has told through the House that the survey work of this line has been completed but Planning Commission has put the condition that the work on this line would be started when the other lines of Gujarat are converted. This is injustice to the people of Saurashtra. I request, through the House, to the Government that this work should be started in this year itself.

The incumbent Railway Minister has earned a good name by bringing sweeping reforms in the Railway resulting of profit of crores of rupees by utilization of the extra land of the Railways. Many places in the country have old tracks and old trains ply there due to which they cannot be linked with other parts of the country. Even today, there are metre gauge lines in Saurashtra because of which there are no direct trains from there to other parts of the country. I request hon. Railway Minister that the railway development work in Saurashtra should be accorded priority.

The people of Sabarkudla Tehsil in my parliamentary constituency have to face a hot of problems for making reservation due to the absence of a computerized railway reservation centre there. I, therefore, request the Governemnt that a computerized reservation centre should be set up soon in Sabarkudla Tehsil in my parliamentary constituency Amreli so that the people can make railway reservation easily.

Last time, a train service had been started via Mahua Rajula and Dhola which has facilitated the people. But, Saurashtra is more connected with Surat and Ahmedabad and most people of Saurashtra and Amreli work in Surat and Ahmedabad and they are still deprived of this train service and they have to change many trains in order to use this train service. I will be better if a direct train is introduced from Mahua Rajula to Surat via Ahmedabad. Through you I would also request hon. Railway Minister that a general coach, a sleeper coach and a 3-AC coach should be added to the train to Mumbai from Bhavnagar coming from Dhola and Mahua Rajula. It will be better if a direct train service is provided to the people of Amreli for Mumbai, Delhi and Ahmedabad.

Everyone is using the Railways in the country today and the way trains have developed abroad is worth mentioning. There is a huge difference between the stations abroad and our stations. Most of our stations are dirty, lacking facilities with many of the stations not even having drinking water. There is lack of basic amenities at the railway stations and the upgradation and modernization work of the stations is not being done at the pace with which the number of passengers is growing. The simple reason for this is the neglect of the railway passengers by the Railways and the work on model stations as announced under the modernization and upgradation scheme not being done in a planned manner and neither any review of working of the officials is being carried out in this regard. A plan has been made to spend rupees 24,000 crore between 2005 to 2010. One year has already passed but even the Railways does not know as to how much of this amount has been spent.

This budget is unprecedented, better and a welfare budget in many ways which nobody could imagine. We were thinking that the fares will not rise. But, Shri Yadavji has not increased the fares continuously for the fifth time. He has rather reduced the fares which proves that the UPA Government is committed to provide relief to the common man under the guidance of Shrimati Sonia Gandhi. Rich and poor, all are happy with this budget. But, railway projects should be made and implemented for all the States and not for only a few States for achieving balanced development of the country.

[English]

*SHRI D. NARBULA (Darjeeling): Sir, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on Rail Budget. I rise in support of this Bill.

First of all I congratulate the Hon'ble Rail Minister Shri Lalu Prasadji and his colleagues namely Hon'ble Shri R. Velu and Shri Naranbhai Rathwa Hon'ble Ministers for Railways for informing the House that the Cash surplus the Railways rose to Rs. 20,000 crores in 2007 and is expected to raise the cash surplus to Rs. 25,000 crores during the period 2007-08, Besides the financial performance this bill has also a proposal to offer economical, efficient and profitable transport to the masses. It has also a proposal to increase the length of passenger's trains by adding 3,000 additional coaches, which will add an additional earning of Rs. 2,000 crores.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

There is a proposal to terminate long queue of Ticket Counter at stations within two years. Passengers will be able to purchase Railway tickets at Home on their computers. The Janasadharan Tickets booking seva will be extended to the all Zonal Railways, which will help to provide employment to several unemployed youths besides facilitating easy availability of Railway Tickets.

There are several other proposals, which will bring great relief to the people of the country. The Hon'ble Minister has given special facilities to the students by giving free monthly season tickets. The girls students get free monthly season tickets upto graduation and boy students upto 12th standard will be provided with this facility of free monthly season tickets for 2nd Class, besides this, Senior Women citizens will have advantage of 50% concession in II classes. The Param Vir Chakra, Mahavir Chakra and Veer Chakra awardees are entitled to Card Passes in travelling in AC 3 tier along with one companion in all trains. But the Ashok Chakra awardees of Indian Arms Forces do not have the facility to travel on Rajdhani and Satabdi. Now this budget provides the facility of travelling in Rajdhani and Satabdi trains on Card Passes issued to Ashok Chakra awardees too.

Several posts of Constables and Inspectors are lying vacant. Hon'ble Minister has proposed to fill up 5,700 vacant posts of Constables and 993 vacant posts of Inspectors in RPF by May 2008. The Government has created 973 additional posts for which recruitment will be done next year.

Sir, Siliguri is the main city in northeast India. It is situated on the Border of North Eastern States, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh. The New Jalpaiguri Station which is the most important Railway Station in this Region is situated only about 7 k.m. from Siliguri. I must thank the Hon'ble Railway Minister for providing fund for the construction of Flyover at Siliguri which connects Siliguri with New Jalpaiguri which helped to fulfil the long standing demand of the aggrieved people of Siliguri. More than one lac people use this flyover every day to go to the New Jalpaiguri Station. Similar over-bridge at Ghoshpukur-Phoolbari by pass road is a prime necessity at Nezbari railway station level crossing near Gualtoli in Siliguri Sub Division. Several Mail and Express trains pass through this route every day which create a great inconvenience to the people who use this bypass so one overbridge at the above place is the prime necessity of the area.

Considering the importance of New Jalpaiguri Railway Station it should be upgraded as a DRM Office. At present there is an office of ADRM. All infrastructures for the up-gradation to DRM office already exist there. So I humbly submit that New Jalpaiguri Railway Station be upgraded as a DRM office.

Railway has spent huge amount for the renovation and upgradation of Siliguri Junction and inspite of this it has become an idle Station. The line between Aluabari Road and Siliguri Junction has been converted into Broad gauge, so Siliguri which is situated within the district of Darjeeling should be given due importance by originating the Darjeeling Mail 2344 down from Siliguri Junction instead of New Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling Mail 2343 up from Sealdah should be extended upto Siliguri Junction. The Sampark Kranti Express from Guwahati to New Delhi should be given a 10 minutes stoppage at Siliguri Junction. I have been requesting the Hon'le Railway Minister to change the name of Aluabari Road. It should be named as Islampur Railway Station instead of Aluabari Road and 5 minutes stoppage of Kanchanjunga Express should be made at Islampur.

The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway has been covered under World Heritage. The Hon'ble Minister has taken initiatives to improve the DHR. A Railway office for DHR has been constructed at Kurseong but this office is not started yet. So I request the Hon'le Railway Minister to start this office at an earliest. The Workshop of DHR established at Tindharia 125 years ago has been repaired and renovated but this renovation is not enough. This workshop, which has ample scope of improvement, should be upgraded. Many spare parts can be manufactured with low cost at this workshop at Tindharia. The upgradation of this workshop will help to generate employment facilities to the local people of the hill areas of Darjeeling and it will also help to produce these materials on less cost. I therefore humbly request to the Hon'le Minister to visit Tindharia workshop once so that measures can be taken up.

Darjeeling is famous for tourism. The people from different parts of the country as well as from abroad visit this place every year. During the season people face great inconvenience or having only one reservation counter at Darjeeling Railway Station, which remains open only from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. So I appeal to the Hon'ble Minister to start two more computerized Reservation Counters at Darjeeling Railway Station and should remain open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m everyday. Similar computerized reservation counters should be established at Kurseong also.

[Dr. D. Narbula]

There is a proposal to privatisation and closure of Railway Printing Press at Kuresong. The Indian Railways require a large volume of Printing Forms, Books and other stationeries in its daily functioning. To meet this requirement it has 16 in house printing presses scattered throughout India. The N.F. Railway Printing Press in Kurseong is amongst one of them, which feeds exclusively to the entire N.F. Railway Zone, which presently employs about 160 persons and allied staff. The apex policy and decision making body of the Railway *i.e.* the Railway Board is finalizing and all set to implement a detailed plan which is structured to lead to the untimely closure of all the printing presses including Kurseong within the next few years. The imminent closure of the Kurseong Press will have a detrimental effect much beyond press staff. I would like to urge upon Hon'ble Railway Minister to spare Kurseong Press as a special case.

There is a proposal to extend railway lines from Siliguri to Rongpo in Sikkim and has earmarked more than Rupees 500 crores for this project. Prior to 1950 there was Narrow-gauge line upto Geilkhola which was swept way by the disaster in 1950. I welcome this proposal, which will help a large number of people who will visit Sikkim when materialised.

Finally Sir, I would like to submit that the following Trains should be introduced :

(1) A large number of Buddhist people of North Bengal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Nepal visit Budhgaya every year for pilgrimage. They face great difficulties for not having a direct Train to Gaya so I propose and request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to introduce a train between Siliguri and Gaya. This will help the people of low-income group to go to Budhgaya for pilgrimage.

(2) One train from Siliguri Junction to Delhi via Kishanganj, Muzaffarpur, Samastipur and other interior places of Bihar should be introduced which will help the people of Bihar and North Bengal who have to depend on Bus services at present.

(3) One Train from Siliguri Junction to Guwahati via Maalbazar and other parts of Doors areas should be introduced and finally.

(4) Many people from North Bengal go to the South for Pilgrimage, for education purpose and medical treatment - a train between Siliguri Junction/New Jalpaiguri to Chennai or Bangalore should be introduced.

I once again support the magnificent Bill for the year 2008-09 placed before the House by Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasadji on 26.2.2008.

[Translation]

SHRI ILYAS AZMI (Shahabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the railway budget. However, it does not mean that it is a very good railway budget. I am afraid that the UPA Government is also going to get infected with the feel good factor, of which the NDA Govt. had become a victim four years ago. I belong to a party which is known as the party of the poorest and dalits of the society. Since the railway fares have not been increased, I, therefore, support this budget. Rathwa Saheb has left but I also want to say that the Railways is not meant just for making money. It is not a firm of Tata's or Ambani's with the aim of minting money in every possible way. It has a social responsibility also. Money of the whole society has been invested in it. Railways is being turned into money minting machine today which is not something that can be welcomed. I want to ask Laluji, let him tell honestly what was the number of employees in the Railways few years ago? It means that only 13 lakh employees have been left today as compared to 19 lakh employees earlier. So, Railways is not supporting 6 lakh families now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to talk about my constituency now. A survey was conducted in 1996-97 for laying a 67 km ling railway line from Gola Gorannath to Shahjahanpur via Mohammi. The estimated cost thereof was Rs. 174 crores. The railways have a surplus fund of Rs. 25 thousand crores which is laying unutilized. Why does he not spend this money? Ten years have passed since the said survey was done. Not a month goes by when I do not send reminders to the Railway Minister or the Minister of State for Railways but every time they give me different replies. Sometimes it is said that the line would be a loss-making venture or that it would barely be able to make profit or that the proposal would be sent to the Planning Commission. However, the proposal has not been sent to the Planning Commission as yet. Now for the last two months I am being told that since the survey was conducted ten years ago; it has become obsolate; hence a new survey would have to be conducted. So I would like the hon. Railway Minister to at least announce that a new survey would be conducted.

Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, similarly there is the Lucknow-Sitapur-Lakhimpur Khiri-Bareilly metre gauge line, for the gauge conversion of which not only I but Shri Santosh Gangwar and Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee have sent representation a number of times. Two years ago an announcement was made that the survey for it had been conducted and the work was announced in the last year's budget. What is the use of an announcement when no work is actually undertaken? No mention of this railway line has been made in the current year's budget. Not a single paisa was spent during the last budget. This railway line passes through the most fertile region in Uttar Pradesh. It is also the most populous area. A person of my constituency will first have to go to Bareilly to undertake onward journey to Mumbai, Delhi or Kolkata. I would like to request the Railway Minister to keel his word since he announced the project in the previous railway budget and to get the work started through the supplementary rail budget.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a small loopline passes through the Nepal border from Gonda Milyani in my constituency, Lakhimpur Khiri, and runs through Dudhwa National Park via Belraya-Paliakalan. A number of lions, elephants and other animals have been mowed down by trains on this line. I have written to the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department and the Central Forest Department to divert the rail track. There is a lot of land area adjacent to the National Park which has not been made use of for centuries. This proposal has been submitted to the Department of Railways. If this rail line is diverted along the Belraya-Siganhi-Majgahi-Balia route it will prove to be of enormous benefit for the people and the revenue of the railway department would also be augmented. This is a highly populous area and the said step would also help ameliorate the adverse effects on the National Park.

Sir, Godan Express runs from Chhapra the constituency of the Railway Minister, to Mumbai via Azamgarh. Azamgarh and Purvanchal have always been highly populous areas. This area has supplied labourers to the entire world. Many countries in the world are populated by the people of this region. Trinidad and Tobago, West Indies and Mauritius etc. have majority of them. Some Prime Ministers and Presidents of these countries originally belong to this region. There was a metre gauge line there earlier. Then it was converted to broad gauge with great difficulty and Godan Express train was started from here. I have been trying for the last two years. Rathwaji please listen. You have also given a reply to me. It travels 1500 kms. to Mumbai but there is no pantry car in the train. I have been informed in writing that pantry coaches are being manufactured and would be attached to the train when they are ready. A train, Kaifiyat Express, which runs on a much shorter route from Azamgarh to Delhi which does not need a pantry has a pantry coach attached to it. On the other hand, pantry car has not yet been attached to a train which is an important train for the people of Azamgarh and more particularly Purvanchal. I would like to urge Rathwaji to get this demand fulfilled within a month's time. A two day's journey in a train which does not have a pantry car becomes a very unpleasant experience. People whose coaches are situated midway are able to buy eatables from the vendors at the platform but people who are in the coaches at either end of the train are not able to do so. Hence, this work should be completed at the earliest.

I have one more demand. Azamgarh is a densely populated area from where many people migrate to other places. People from here go to Dubai, Saudi Arab and Europe via Mumbai and Delhi. Mumbai has a large number of people from Azamgarh. Now that there is facility for running a new train from Azamgarh, you should start a train for Mumbai whether it terminates at VT, Shivaji Terminal or Lokmanya Tilak Terminal.

*SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): Sir, I am laying my written speech regarding the Rail Budget on the Table with the hope that hon. Railway Minister would not only give it due consideration but also make all efforts to implement the suggestions. I belong to a State where most of the passengers are honest in the matter of buying tickets and very few passengers are found to be travelling without a ticket. But my State is neglected in every Railway budget. I would like to make certain suggestions which would not burden the Government with much expenditure and merely rescheduling the trains would do the trick.

1. The train which runs from Hoshiarpur to Jalandhar should be extended upto Amritsar.
2. The train from Hoshiarpur to Jalandhar should be extended utpo Pathankot.
3. The train from Nangal to Saharanpur should be extended upto Haridwar because the rush of passengers is such that more than 25 buses run from Nangal to Haridwar on a daily basis.
4. The train from Jailon Doaba to Jalandhar should be extended upto Amritsar.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Avinash Rai Khanna]

5. One train should be run from Hoshiarpur to Haridwar. Similarly, a train should be run from Hoshiarpur to New Delhi.

6. Anandpur Saheb and Patna Saheb are two places of pilgrimage but no train runs between these two places. A railway track is already present, only a train needs to be started.

7. A Jan Shatabdi Express runs from Chandigarh to Delhi which starts from Chandigarh at around 10.30 a.m. If this train is started from Nangal at 8.00 in the morning it will benefit thousands of traders, employees and other people and it will also augment the revenue earnings because Himachal Pradesh adjoins Nangal and NFL factory and Bhakra dam are also situated there.

8. In view of the importance of Nangal station, a platform and a footbridge need to be built there.

9. Ropar railway station generates huge revenue generation for the railways because of the cement factories, thermal plants and tractor factories situated there. Hence, this railway station needs to be beautified and sheds, railway platforms and water coolers should be installed there.

10. The platforms at all the stations from Ropar to Nangal are very low and the passengers have to face a lot of difficulties in boarding and alighting from the trains. The level of these platforms needs to be raised.

11. Nawan Sehar Doaba and Ropar are the two very important districts in Punjab and situated close together. It would be very convenient for the people if both these districts are linked by rail.

The railways charge surcharge from the passengers. The Government has never disclosed as to how much funds have been collected as surcharge and where those funds have been spent. Similarly, the passengers are charged safety-charges but thousands of bridges are unsafe and travelling by trains is also very unsafe. The details of the expenditure out of these funds have never been presented in this House or made public. These details need to be presented properly in the House.

The passengers and their accompanying relatives who come to see them off have to face great deal of inconvenience in buying platform tickets as the passengers have already booked their tickets but their relatives have to stand in long queues for platform tickets. Hence, there is a need to make such provision that the platform tickets may also be bought at the time of booking the tickets.

There is a provision that if any person boards the train in a hurry without ticket, he is charged the fare from the starting point to destination of the train and the same amount as fine which encourages corruption. If a passenger himself asks for a ticket from T.T. he should be charged the fare from the boarding station to his destination with a nominal fine.

Punjab has not been given any big project since UPA Government has come to power for the last four years. Hence, I request the Minister of Railways to give a major rail factory to Punjab.

I thank the Minister of Railways once again for giving an assurance regarding survey for new rail line from Hoshiarpur to Una. I request the hon. Minister to get this work started at the earliest.

*SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA (Salumber): Sir, I rise today to participate in the discussion on railway budget 2008-09 and would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways for making an announcement in the railway budget to run a train from Indore to Udaipur three days a week as against the demand of a new train from Udaipur to Indore. I request hon. Minister of Railways to run this train a daily basis.

Similarly, he has announced to reintroduce Delhi-Chetak Express from Udaipur to Delhi via Ajmer. I request him to run this train daily in place of three days a week. The hon. Minister makes the announcements but these are not implemented even after one year which leads to loss of public faith in the Government. The hon. Minister of Railways had announced gauge conversion from Udaipur to Ahmedabad in his last budget speech but the work has not started till date even after one year.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways to the following demands pertaining to the State of Rajasthan.

1. Linking of Jaisalmer to Nagaur and Bikaner to Falodi-Nagaur and Kolayat.

2. Linking of Bhiwandi to Delhi-Ahmedabad broad gauge line.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

3. Linking of Gangapur city to Dhaulpur and gauge conversion of Dhaulpur-Sarmathura line.

4. Extension of Dungarpur-Baanswada-Ratlam line to Nimbahed.

5. Jaisalmer–Sanu via Hameera.

6. Bhiwandi to Churu via Lahoru-Pilani-Madreba-Alsisar-Malsisar-Bisau.

7. Linking of Jaipur to Nathdwara via Karwa, Gangapur, Bhilwada, Baneda, Shahpur-Kekdi-Malpura, Diggi-Fagi-Sanganer Naya Tonk district headquarters by broad gauge line.

8. Laying of new rail line from Bilada to Bar and completion of gauge conversion from Pipad road to Bilada.

9. Jaisalmer to Barmer.

10. Ajmer to Medta road.

11. Anoopgarh to Khajuwala via Ramgarh is an important rail route but there is no announcement in the Budget speech except a one line reference.

I would like to remind the hon. Minister of Railways that he had given an assurance regarding gauge conversion of Udaipur-Ahmedabad rail line in response to the memorandums submitted by people's representatives, the representatives of different organizations and the public during his stay at Udaipur (Rajasthan). But except one rail line no announcement or provision has been made in the budget speech.

I would like to request him to get the work started at the earliest and provide relief to the public.

Why Ahmedabad-Udaipur line should be converted into broad gauge?

Main points:-

1. Udaipur is the divisional headquarters of tribal population.

2. Udaipur division is very rich in minerals like zinc, lead, soap stone, limestone, rock phosphate etc. and it produces 80 percent of total production of zinc and lead in the country.

3. Thousands of youth of Udaipur division are serving in different defence forces.

4. Thousands of labourers of Udaipur division are working in Ahmedabad (Gujarat) and Mumbai (Maharashtra) and other cities or regions.

5. Thousands of traders of Udaipur are carrying out business activities in various parts of the country.

6. Besides marble production (green, pink, white) there are huge resources of gold, silver and granite in Udaipur division.

7. Everyday thousands of tonnes of cement in cement factories and other minerals are loaded and transported. If it can be done by railways, it would be cheaper.

Hon. Minister of Railways has ignored the railway demands in Rajasthan State and completely ignored Udaipur division.

I request the Railway Minister to make announcement as well as provisions in the budget for the following new rail routes and gauge conversion.

1. Gauge conversion of Udaipur to Ahmedabad line from meter gauge into broad gauge.

2. Udaipur to Modasaho Ahmedabad alternate route via Tidi, Parshad, Rishabdev, Kherwada, Bichhiwada Ratanpur, Modasa.

3. Dungarpur to Abu road via Kherwada, Jhadol/ Som, Kotda, Swarupganj, Abu road.

4. Dungarpur to Ratlam via Sangwada Garhi, Partapur, Baanswada, Chhoti Sarvan via Ratlam.

5. Chittorgarh, Chhoti Sadri, Bari Sadri, Pratapgarh, Peepalkhoont, Ghatol, Baanswada, Sajjangarh, Kushalgarh via Dohad.

6. Delhi Sarai Rohilla to Porbandar Express.

   The passengers and goods will always be available on these rail routes.

7. Jodhpur Sampark Kranti Express.

8. Stoppage of Dehradun Express at Bandikui Junction.

[English]

SHRIMATI YASHODHARA RAJE SCINDIA (Gwalior): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise today to be a part of and participate in the Railway Budget discussion. I also thank you for giving me time for the same.

Nearly 90 per cent of the passenger traffic that we see today travel in the Unreserved Class and the Sleeper Class, and only 10 per cent is actually travelling by Executive Class or Higher Classes. Therefore, today, I would like to speak a little bit and touch on the point of Garib Rath. The hon. Minister has told us that there will be 10 new Garib Raths coming. If these Garib Raths are really for the common man; if they are really for the *Janata;* and if they are really for the last person that needs to be counted, then we need to keep down the fares for it also. How is he — if it is for the last man; if it is for the person who is Below Poverty Line (BPL); and if it is for a person who is poor — going to be able to afford a Rs. 500 ticket on a Garib Rath? Therefore, I would like to tell the hon. Minister, through you that this issue needs to be reconsidered and looked at.

He had also made an announcement that there would be 50 new trains this year. If he really wants to have that 90 per cent of passenger traffic — that travels through Unreserved Class and Sleeper Class — really travel properly, then Unreserved Class and Sleeper Class should be made available in at least 40 out of those 50 trains. If you ever look out of your compartment and look at this unreserved class and this sleeper class that may be on the opposite side of the platform, you see the way they travel. It is like travelling as cattle; even cattle travel better than that. It is like going through jail; it is like going through the cages. Sometimes, you feel so bad that you are travelling by a particular class, and you have this 90 per cent of people travelling in this particularly sad way. How will women be able to travel like this? How will old women, particularly the older generation, be able to travel like this? That is something that needs to be looked at again.

The hon. Minister talked about the freight corridor. The freight corridor has already taken two years to be put in the planning stage. I am told that it will happen only after another seven years, which means a good nine years to go. At the same time, if you look at last year's Budget, he has talked about the high-speed corridors. If this freight corridor is going to be taking at least nine to ten years to come into fruition, then, at the same time, parallelly, we should have these high-speed corridors also to come about. It has been forgotten about completely, and not a single bit of mention is there in the hon. Minister's speech. I would suggest to the Minister that at the same time the freight corridor comes about, the high-speed corridor should also come about. Why do I mention this? They say that there is a criterion by which they want to join the cities that fall within a distance of 300 kilometres to 350 kilometres. Therefore, the routes like Delhi-Chandigarh, Delhi-Jaipur, Delhi-Agra, Delhi-Kanpur, Delhi-Bhopal, Chennai-Bangalore-Mysore are ripe for the picking. They say that the cities in these routes fall within the distance of 300 kilometres to 350 kilometres. Besides every city that it touches, which are the second-tier and three-tier cities which will be joined? They will be economical, though they are backward right now. We are always looking at either Chennai, Delhi or Mumbai as the cities that need to be connected. I would like to inform the hon. Minister that if he joins these cities with the highspeed corridor, then the second tier and the third tier cities will also benefit economically from this.

Why I am touching on this freight corridor topic is because there is a crucial corridor that has still not been studied. It is, they say, still in the study phase. It is about the Delhi-Chennai freight corridor. This should include Gwalior also because Delhi-Chennai is a straight run and Gwalior does come in the middle. I would ask the hon. Railway Minister to please include Gwalior in that Delhi-Chennai freight corridor.

The whole world is looking at India right now, and India is looking always at a "Look East" Policy. In this "Look East" Policy, we are talking about South East Asian countries; we are talking about Southern China. When we are looking at port connectivity for the rail to go to the port, why can we not at the same time look at connecting all our trains to South East Asia and to South China? It will help in cargo and in so many different things economically. While we are still looking at our infrastructure of the internal India, we should also look at outside infrastructure. The Railways, as the hon. Minister said, is making a lot of money. A lot of internal accruals are helping him do infrastructure development. At the same time, if India has become the global power or it is on the verge of becoming, this is the time then to also join our rail to South East Asia and South China because South China, they say, is the great economic power right now.

When we talking about the Indian Railways and how it is playing an increasingly important role in world railway affairs, I would like to commend the Department for one thing and that is the decision that they have taken to establish an International Railway Strategic Management Institute. This is the only Institute of its kind and it will train managers of railways from all over the world. I would like to commend them about that.

I would like to also talk about the security of the Railways.

We have the largest security force of the railways in the world, 64,000 personnel, which is the equivalent of one person per kilometre of track. Nowhere will you find this kind of ratio of one person per kilometre. In addition, the Railways has 3,000 GRP personnel. Still the crime rate is high. Still we hear of rape. Still we hear of chain-pulling. Still we hear of people getting thrown out. What is the problem when you have 64,000 personnel and another 3,000 GRP personnel with you? We need to modernise this force. We may have all those personnel to man security but if we do not modernise that security force, if we do not give them enough walkie-talkies and give them training of security – send them abroad or do whatever but given them some security training – nothing will come about in regard to looking after the women, the children and the poor people who travel by these trains.

Small arms must be given to them and not the bulky guns. You have this old *baba aadam ke zamane ka* gun which itself weighs 50 kilograms. By the time the security person goes after the thief carrying his heavy gun the man is gone. So, give him small arms. Give him arms so that he can run after the thief and catch him. Give them more CCTVs. Give them more dog squads. Dog squads are very useful. You go to airports, you go to train stations abroad and you find dog squads everywhere. They are the ones who really catch the thieves properly.

We are talking about accidents and railway safety. All the time safety is being talked about. We have reached a plateau where the safety is coming to about 200 to 230 per year of accidents. Rs. 17,000 crore were put in by the Railways during the first push in railway safety. That is the reason why this plateau has come about where you have about 200 accidents. Now is the time for a secondary push to be made. If that secondary push is made, maybe of another ten to fifteen thousand crores, you will find better safety.

I would also like to touch upon an article I read in a paper the other day. It was a business paper. I am sure the Left party colleagues who are with me today, my *vaam panthi sadasya,* will not have any objection to this. That was an interesting article. It was about the China Railway Construction Company. China Railway Construction Company has gone in for an IPO. This IPO has been oversubscribed 250 times which is something that is unheard of. If China Railway Construction Company can go in for an IPO that can be so beautifully oversubscribed, why cannot our Indian Railways also go for an IPO? They will never need to worry about any money coming in from the Budget. They will be substantially increasing their budget by that IPO. Plus, the *janata* will have a chance of being a part of the Railways. This is the suggestion I would make that I would hope the hon. Minister will note down and take care of.

The other issue I would like to touch upon is carbon credits. We are talking about greening Railways all the time. But, unfortunately, last year's carbon credits they could not handle properly. Therefore, they were not able to get the money that they should have got for these carbon credits. This year I hope that it will not happen. This year I hope your *yojanas* are in place where you can exchange these carbon credits for money because this will be the first Railways in the world that will be able to get money back for its carbon credits.

I would like to thank the hon. Minister, since I am a sportswoman first and then a politician, and say that the history of the sports initiative that the Railways have done has been highly commendable. In fact, I would suggest that they take over the Sports Authority of India as they are doing a far better job. They are doing a far better job of looking after sports than any other person or any other *sanstha* is. They look after athletics, hockey, weightlifting, and they are winning medals everywhere. So, I would hope that hon. Lalu Prasadji continues to give more money and look out more for the sports people.

I would like to come to my Madhya Pradesh.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please conclude.

SHRIMATI YASHODHARA RAJE SCINDIA: Give me five minutes, Sir. This is my first speech. You have to encourage us, Sir.

[Shrimati Yashodhara Raje Scindia]

My hon. Sumitra Mahajan ji has talked about the infrastructure and as to how Madhya Pradesh has been left out of many things that the Railway Minister has given in his Budget. I will touch upon only a few and the balance speech would then be laid on the Table.

I would like to say that while my brother, hon. Madhavrao Scindia was the Railway Minister, he had put together a *yojana* - Guna-Etawah line. Unfortunately he has gone. Since 2001 - this was before his time when he was the Railway Minister - and now we are in 2008, yet the Bhind-Etawah section is yet not been done. I would ask the Railway Minister to please hurry up this line so that we would all take benefit of it.

I would like to say about Taj Express which goes all the way to Jhansi. In this section, there is a small Sonagiri Station, which is a very

[Translation]

historical station and quite ancient religious place of Jains. In view of it, I would earnestly urge the hon. Minister of Railways to provide a two minutes stoppage of Taj Express at Sonagiri Station after Dabra railway station. If it is provided, it will bring laurels for the railways. The followers of Jainism will for Railways' prosperity.

Sir, Gwalior is a historical and a very big station, whereas, it has not been renovated so far. The hon. Minister has identified 50 stations across the country for upgrading to world class stations. I urge the hon. Minister to include Gwalior railway station in that list.

Sir, at the same time, I demand for a stoppage of Rajdhani Express at Gwalior railway station. Presently, no Rajdhani train stops at Gwalior. All south bound Rajdhani trains run via Gwalior but none of these trains have been provided a stoppage here, I would like to remind the hon. Minister that when I met him he said that you are like my daughter. If he considers me as his daughter then I would request my father-like Railway Minister to concede my demand and provide stoppage of one Rajdhani Express at Gwalior.

Sir, I would not take much time. Indian Railways carry 6.2 billion passengers and the population of the world is 6.00 billion, whereas Indian railways carry 6.2 billion passengers. It means no system in the world can compete with the service provided by our railways.

In the end I would like to say,

if we want to be a nation of tomorrow, and if we want to be the leaders of tomorrow, then we need to take the steps today. I take this opportunity to thank you very much for giving me the opportunity. Thank you, once again, Sir.

[Translation]

*Sir, Gwalior station is pinning for facilities. It should be included in the list of stations proposed to be upgraded as world class station. Gwalior is not only a divisional headquarters, but also city of historical heritages. Being close to NCR, it is emerging as an important tourist and commercial centre of Central India. It is an important central point between Delhi and Bhopal. It is located on Delhi-Chennai main railway line. From tourism point of view, several world fame tourist places, such as Surya Mandir, Gwalior Fort, Scindia School, Statue of Maharani Laxmibai, Tombs of great musician Tansen and Gaus Mohammad, Gujri Mahal, Jai Vilas Mahal Museum are there in Gwalior. Large number of foreign as well as domestic tourists come to Gwalior to see these important places. Therefore, it is imperative to bring Gwalior on world railway map and it should be upgraded to the level of world class station.

Gwalior-Jaipur intercity should be extended upto Ajmer. Around two-and-a-half lakh muslims live in Gwalior-Chambal division. Every year, they visit majar of Baba Khwaja Garib Nawaj at Ajmer. In absence of a direct train, they have to board another train resulting in loss of their precious time and money. Therefore, Gwalior-Jaipur intercity should be extended upto Ajmer so that lakhs of devotees may conveniently reach Ajmer Sharief to pay obeisance.

A train should be started between Gwalior and Mumbai. A new express train should be started between Gwalior–Mumbai via Shivpuri-Guna-Maksi-Ujjain-Ratlam-Baroda-Surat as at present local passengers either have go to Mathura or they go to Bhopal and then change the train for going to Baroda-Surat. Introduction of the said train will benefit traders and industrialists of this entire area and at the same time railways will also earn adequate revenue. For the last 90 years only two trains have been plying between Gwalior and Mumbai which are Amritsar-Dadar Express and Ferozpur-CST. Since, it

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*... *This part of the Speech was laid on the Table.

is a shorter route between Gwalior-Mumbai, therefore, it would save enough time.

Sheopur should be connected with broad gauge. Sheopur Kalan being predominantly tribal area, depends more on agriculture. The common men and the businessmen of Gwalior have been demanding for long that the railway line in this district should be converted into broad gauge, whereas, the Ministry of Railways has not taken any concrete step in this regard. On the other hand, Kota city, adjoining Sheopur district is a famous broad gauge railway junction. Sawai Madhopur is 55 kms away from district headquarters Sheopur Kalan. Sawai Madhopur is a big broad gauge railway junction located on Rajasthan Border. Connecting Sheopur to Sawai Madhopur will surely accelerate development of this area. Therefore, Sheopur Kalan should immediately be provided connectivity of broad gauge so that long outstanding demand of the people of this region is fulfilled.

Guna-Etawah project should be completed expeditiously. The pace of work on Bhind-Etawah section under Guna-Etawah project should be sped up. With the untiring efforts of former Minister of Railways, Shri Madhavrao Scindia the work on Guna-Etawah project was started two decades ago but in the absence of strong will power and also adequate funds the work could only be completed from Guna to Bhind so far. The progress of work on Bhind-Etawah section of 21 years old Guna-Etawah project is very slow. My submission is that adequate funds should be allocated for expeditious completion of the said project so that the people of Malwa and Gwalior-Etawah region are benefited.

A Jan Shatabdi train should be started between Gwalior-New Delhi, especially in view of increasing traffic load on this route. Several Central and State Government offices are located there and strategically also Gwalior is an important city. Therefore, it is necessary to have a better traffic coordination between these two cities. In view of increased trade and industrial activities there is heavy pressure of traffic on this line. In view of it, I earnestly request the hon. Minister to introduce a Jan Shatabdi Express between Gwalior and New Delhi as soon as possible and it should start from Gwalior at 6.00 AM and reach Delhi at 11.00 O'clock and in return journey, it should start at 6.00 PM from New Delhi and reach Gwalior at 11.00 PM.

A new train should be introduced between Gwalior and Bhopal. Bhopal is capital of M.P. and Gwalior is also a city where a number of Central and State Government offices are located. Therefore, everyday a large number of people from Gwalior region travel to Bhopal for personal as well as official purposes. Therefore, in view of it, a new train should be introduced between Gwalior and Bhopal. It should start at 5.00 AM from Gwalior and arrive Bhopal at 10.30 A.M. and for return journey in the evening it should start from Bhopal at 6.00 p.m. so that people can return to Gwalior the same day.

EMU Local service should be started on Jhansi-Gwalior-Agra route. In view of the industrial workers, office employees, traders, students commuting daily on Jhansi-Gwalior-Agra route and the increasing passenger pressure on trains an EMU service on Agra-Gwalior-Jhansi route must be started immediately so that daily commuters could be saved from facing problems while travelling.

Banglore-Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express should be given stoppage at Gwalior. Banglore-Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express 2429-2430 which runs from Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station passes through Gwalior railway station. But due to no stoppage of the aforesaid train at Gwalior the businessmen have to face a lot of problems. Many businessmen from Gwalior region have to travel to southern India. Besides being a historic city, Gwalior is also an important metropolitan city from strategic and tourism point of view. A large number of foreign tourists visit this place. Therefore, keeping the importance of the city in mind, I would urge him to provide stoppage of 2429-2430 Rajdhani Express train running from Nizamuddin to Bangalore so that the businessmen of Gwalior could be benefited from this.

Following trains should be provided stoppage at Gwalior stations: 2641-2642 Nizamuddin-Kanyakumari Express, 2649-2650, Nizamuddin-Yashvantpur Express, 2429-2430 Bangalore Rajdhani Express, 2437-2438 Sikandrabad-Nizamuddin-Sikandrabad Express, 2441-2442 Nizamuddin-Bilaspur-Nizamuddin Express.

The frequency of Ujjain Dehradun and Indore Dehradun Express should be increased. At present there are only two trains running from Gwalior to Haridwar and both these trains run only four days a week whereas a number of pilgrims visit Haridwar daily on the occasion of Poornima, Amavasya and for tonsure ceremony and other religions works but in the absence of train on three days in a week, a lot of problems are faced by the

[Shrimati Yashodhara Raje Scindia]

passengers of this region and they have to travel by bus as there is no other option available. Therefore, it is requested to you to kindly increase the number of days by one day each and make it 6 days a week for running the aforesaid trains so that the people of Gwalior region may have train availability for Haridwar on six days a week.

Jhansi-Lucknow Passenger train (1509-1510) should be extended upto Gwalior. At present 1509-1510 Passenger train is running on daily basis between Jhansi and Lucknow. Keeping the convenience of Gwalior passengers in mind this train may kindly be extended upto Gwalior so that it may be convenient for the passengers travelling from Gwalior to Kanpur and Lucknow.

Second AC coaches should be added to the Bhind-Indore Express (9320-9319) train. At present II AC coaches are not provided in the Bhind-Indore Express train (9320-9319) due to which the passengers have to face a lot of difficulties. Therefore, keeping the convenience of the passengers in mind II AC facility should be provided for the passengers travelling between Indore and Bhind.

The direct train from Ahmedabad to Agra Fort which has been discontinued, should be started again and the same should be extended upto Gwalior. In the past a train 5 up and 6 down used to run between Agra Fort and Ahmedabad and this train was also discontinued due to certain gauge conversion. This is one of the busiest routes which is used by innumerable passengers daily who travel to Pushkarji in Ajmer, a Hindu pilgrimage, Khwaja Saheb's Dargah is visited by muslim pilgrims, Nasiya at Soniji is visited by Jain community, people visit Jnanoday of Nareli and a number of people visit other tourist places like Agra etc. The aforesaid train should be started again and extended upto Gwalior so that the people of Gwalior region are able to utilize the facilities for travel to holy places falling on this route.

The Railway goods godown should be shifted to Rairu. Since last one year local district administration has put a ban on movement of trucks to and from the goods godown during day time due to which the transportation of goods has been affected badly and the railway goods loading system has collapsed. Keeping in view the practical difficulties being faced by the businessmen, the railway goods godown should be shifted to Rairu so that the loading of goods takes place smoothly without any hindrance and the businessmen of the region could be saved from facing such practical problems.

A Sulabh Shauchalaya Complex should be constructed inside the Gwalior Railway Station premises. The demand for a sulabh complex at Gwalior railway station has been pending for the last 13 years. Wherever the people of Gwalior and the public representatives made a demand for the same, they got only assurances and as a result there is dirt and filth all over the premises at the railway station. At present Gwalior is a developing city. There is huge potential for tourism, industry, trade and business. Therefore, a Sulabh Complex should immediately be constructed in the station premises so that there is no litter all over, the place and a good impression is made upon the passengers who visit this place.*

[English]

*SHRI P.C. GADDIGOUDAR (Bagalkot): Hon'ble Speaker, in the Railway Budget 2008-09, Karnataka has been totally neglected by the Railway Ministry. We had presented a "Wish List" tabling the State's requirements, which included Bagalkot-Kudachi Line, Gulbarga-Bidar Line, Almati-Koppal Line, Hubli-Ankola line, Gadag-Solapur Gauge conversion, Gadag-Bagalkot Gauge Conversion etc. But none of these projects had been significant progress and the allocation have reckoned to be insufficient to make any major headway.

As far as 'allocations' are concerned there is nothing much to speak off. Among the new railway lines, the Gulbarga-Bidar Line (140 Kms) has been given Rs. 20 crores out of the required Rs. 184 crore estimated cost. So far about Rs. 80 crores has been spent on this Railway line. It requires Rs. 85 crores to complete this project. Only Rs. 5 crores has been given for the Munirabad-Mehboobnagar line as against a whooping Rs. 451 crores more required. Only Rs. 30 crores has been allocated on the 65 Km Kottur-Harihar Railway line. Still it requires Rs. 17.54 crores for completion.

The Indian Railways will spend Rs. 10 crores for the decade old Kadur-Chikkamagalore-Sakleshpur Railway line, which still requires 198 crores. For the Hassan-Bangalore project (*Via* Shravanabelagola) Rs. 55 crores has been given but is still requires Rs. 116 crores to be completed.

Funds allocated for the Hubli-Ankola, Bangalore-Satyamangalam and Rayadurga-Tumkur are too meager to mention.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

Another area is Gauge conversion projects, which are also neglected in the budget. They are—The Kolar-Chikkaballapur has been allocated Rs. 70 crores and only Rs. 9 crore more is required for its completion.

The Hospet-Guntakal line has been given Rs. 21 crores and it still requires Rs. 83 crores. The 300 Km Solapur-Hotgi (Gadag) line has been given a sum of Rs. 5 crore though it requires Rs. 43 crores for completion. The Rs. 608 crores Mysore-Chamarajnagar line has been allocated Rs. 20 crores as against Rs. 459 crores required.

The Kudachi-Bagalkot railway line, the long pending project which passes through my Parliamentary Constituency. It was started in 1894 during the regime of East India Company. This 110 Km railway line formally flagged off survey in the year 1993, by the then Railway Minister Shri Jaffer Sharief. Unfortunately, the survey did not find the project as commercially viable. This railway line is expected to provide fillip to the cement, mining and sugar industries, in Bagalkot and Belgaum district, besides linking the Sholapur-Gadag and Hubli-Mumbai line. It passes through the taluk headquarters of Mudkol and jamkhandi and few hobies.

Alternative Route: The Kudachi-Bagalkot line will also emerge as the nearest and alternative route for carrying iron ore from Bellary district and granites from Ilkal and surrounding places to the Mumbai port. It will decongest the Hospet-Mudgoan (NH) 12 and N.H. 218.

The latest survey had found the project viable in the wake of increased industrial and mining activities in the region. Nearly 15 sugar factories in Bagalkot region have been suffering due to lack of good rail connectivity. But the Railway Ministry seems to have ignored these facts.

I, therefore, appeal to the Hon'ble Railway Minister to consider all these crucial facts and take it up and complete this key railway line between Kudachi-Bagalkot. The entire economy of the Northern Karnataka region will get a big boost if this Railway line is completed.

[Translation]

*SHRI M. APPADURAI (Tenkasi): Sir, I welcome the Union Railway Budget for the year 2008-2009 presented by our Hon'ble Railway Minister.

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*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil laid on the Table.

At the outset I would like to express my thanks on my own behalf and an behalf of the people of my Tenkasi Constituency to both Shri Lalu and his colleague Shri Velu at the helm of affairs in Ministry for Railways.

Pothigai Express between Shencottah and Chennai has been made a Daily Train at our behest on your conceding to our long pending demand. We express our deep gratitude. I would like to request you to look into our another demand to complete at the earliest the gauge conversion work between Kollam and Shencottah.

I would like to repeat our demand to construct a road over bridge at Puliarai 'S' bending in NH 208. There is also an urgent need to speed up the construction of Tenkasi Railway over bridge. Tirunelveli-Ambasamudram-Tenkasi gauge conversion work may be expedited. Pothigai Express Train may be provided with an AC First Class Coach as Courtallam is a tourist destination.

The status of recognized Trade Unions may be accorded to Employee's Unions in the production units also. Through secret ballot this recognition may be given to Trade Unions in the production units like ICF, Perambur. Staff Council Members may be nominated from among the Trade Unions through proportional representation. The present method of elections to these posts have given rise to violent electioneering and partisan nominations and one upmanship leading to political interference and corrupt practices. Hence I urge upon the Minister of Railways to consider suitable modifications.

Common Seniority System being followed in Chennai ICF has given rise to several lacunae that come in the way of promotional opportunities to the industrial workers. A committee comprising of Trade Union representatives may be constituted to consider evolve modalities to effect changes in service matters.

In the name of environment protection, an attempt to close the Forging Unit in ICF, Chennai is on the anvil. This is a ploy to outsource the work. Instead steps must be taken to take pollution control measures and continue to keep the forging unit operational in ICF, Perambur itself.

At a time when the cost of building materials like steel and cement have increased manifold, the home loan given to railway employees is not enough. The House Building Advance paid to the Railway Employees is not adequate. Hence a liberal home loan disbursement should be there in the Railways extending atleast one hundred

[Shri M. Appadurai]

times the basic pay of the salary as advance and it must not be reduced. Free rail pass given to railway workers must be extended for a distance of 100 Kms.

Outsourcing of work must not be resorted to by the production units like Integrated Coach Factories of the Railways. There is a need to expand the ICF, Chennai as the area available now do not commensurate with the industrial activity there. Recently a situation arose to bring down the target number of coaches to be manufactured from 1450 to 1355 coaches. Insufficient supply of welding gas is the reason cited. This is because they have been relying on a single supply agency. Alternative arrangements should be in place so that production target is always met.

Salem, Tiruppur, Erode and Coimbatore have all become cities with Municipal Corporations. Introducing a daily passenger train between Salem and Coimbatore that would link all the four corporation cities would benefit workers, vendors, students and the public.

Chennai Egmore-Mangalore Express Train used to reach Erode at 7.40 AM everyday. This was of great use to about 5000 season ticket holders living in and around Karur and Erode to go to their work places in Tiruppur and Coimbatore daily. But without any forewarning the time schedule of this train has been changed and it reaches Erode at 9.30 AM. This causes great hardship to the commuters and no Railway Authority has come forward to redress their grievances. In the absence of a shuttle train at this hour to help season ticket holders to commute, Chennai-Mangalore Express must be run as per the earlier time schedule as the travelling public are greatly agitated.

Considering the fact that many new industrial units have come up in the suburbs of Chennai city, there is an urgent need to augment the EMU service between Chennai Beach-Tambaram and Chennai Beach-Chingleput increasing the number of coaches to twelve. This calls for extending platforms in all the wayside stations. I would like to draw the attention of this august House that I raised this demand last year too. Railway Stations in important towns in Tamil Nadu including Chennai must have more ticket counters. All the stations in between Chennai Beach and Tambaram need more number of ticket counters and similarly there is a need to extend the time of functioning of Season Ticket Counters.

There is also a need to rescind the decision to wind up some of the printing presses of Indian Railways. It is learnt that all the Railway Printing Units are to be closed down completely in due course. This step taken by the Railway Board would affect about 275 press workers of the Southern Railway in its Royapuram Printing Unit. The total number of these press workers all over the country would be around 6000 in all. Instead of resorting to closures as a remedy Railways may modernize its printing units with trained men who are provided with better training for enhancing their skills.

When the Railways are boasting of Rs. 25000 crores of rupees, then how is it that Bonus Ceiling has not been increased further from Rs. 3500/-. There is also a discrimination between Central and State Government employees and the employees of the Railways even after the gazetted modification of the Bonus Act of 1985 on 1.4.06. Apart from the productivity linked Bouns, profit linked Bonus may also be considered.

It was stated that 1.5 lacs of vacant posts in the Railways would be filled all over India. But measures towards privatization, outsourcing and surrendering of posts and lock outs are hidden in this Budget. On the one hand you are regularizing the services of porters and on the other cut in jobs are also resorted to.

All the trained Act Apprentice get job opportunities in the Southern Railway. But there is a delay in providing jobs to about 2500 Act Apprentices in ICF, Perambur. I urge upon the Railway Ministry to expedite the same.

Erecting escalators in stations like Madurai is a welcome step. This may kindly be extended to Tambaram and Mamblam stations also where the over bridge stair case is steep causing inconvenience to aged people and women.

A new ROB linking Ayanavaram – Loco Scheme Road may be constructed in place of the Loco works station ROB in the Thiruvallur route that is there right from the British days.

Considering the security aspect and the safety of passengers, the proposal for out sourcing of the Rail Coach maintenance works must be reconsidered.

There is an urgent need to increase the pace of the work pertaining to laying of second broad gauge line between Kovai Irugur and Coimbatore and also the gauge conversion work linking Tiruvarur-Nagoor-Karaikal.

Gauge conversion between Coimbatore-Dindigul and Pollachi-Palghat must be commenced with fund allocation.

Kaleeswara Mills and Somasundara Mills of NTC near Railway station in Coimbatore have been remaining closed and the vacant land can be taken over by the Railways and shall be used by the Railways to expand the Railway Station and to construct buildings required for the offices and staff of the Railways.

All Kerala bound trains from Chennai must be routed through Coimbatore junction instead of being diverted through Podanur.

I would also request you to introduce an Inter-city Express Train between Coimbatore and Bangalore. A new express train in the broad-gauge section may be introduced to run between Chennai and Tiruvarur via Thanjavur. Laying of Railway line between Nagapattinam and Velankanni and also Pattukottai-Mannargudi via Needamangalam must be taken up while going in for gauge conversion between Mayiladuthurai-Rameswaram via Thiruvarur-Thiruthuraipoondy-Karaikudi.

I would like to thank the Railways for running a daily train between Shencottah and Madurai as per our request made on behalf of the people of my constituency. The pending requests to construct one more platform at Tirunelveli Junction and construction of a new Railway Station at Palayamcottah Maharajapuram may be considered positively.

Pearl City express train coaches are old and steps may be taken to change them. Immediate commencing of ROB work in Tuticorin first gate and second gate is necessary while there is a need to increase the pace of ROB construction at the third gate. I thank the railway for taking up the new line between Ramnad and Kanyakumari via Tuticorin. You may also consider introducing a train between Chennai and Tiruchendur.

Gauge conversion work in the Thiruvarur-Nagoor-Karaikal section must be expedited. Steps must be taken to run trains from Thiruvarur to Chennai via Thanjavur.

Some passenger fares have been reduced through this Budget. But it fails to enthuse the common people and the poorer sections of the society. About 200 express trains have been converted to be super fast express trains. But their journey time has not decreased in commensurate with the increase in the super fast express charges. Catering service is being handed over to the private sector. Many such privatization proposals are on the anvil. Considering the fact that neither job security nor social security are there for the workers in the private sector taking away their basic rights, Railways may have to be careful.

In these 62 years of independence we have not laid many new lines. Still much needs to be done. Industrial development is crying for more of connectivity through Railways. Like porters whose services have been regularized other temporary staff in other departments of the Railways must also be considered for regularization. Passenger amenities have to improve further. Priority may be accorded to laying double line between Chennai-Nagercoil via Tuticorin, and electrification of railway lines between Villupuram and Nagercoil. There is also a need to accord top priority to lay the lines and operate exclusive freight corridor to increase Railway's revenues and to give a boost to Nation's economy.

With this I conclude.

[English]

SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP (Rajampet): Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad for year 2008-09. He has presented a remarkable Budget in this House. Last year, Lalu ji has shown a profit of Rs. 20,000 crore; this year profit has been increased to Rs. 25,000 crore.

15.59 hrs.

[DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY *in the Chair*]

The total allocation made for the on-going and new projects is Rs. 37,500 crore. In this regard, I wish to convey my heartfelt thanks to Laluji for considering new project between Cuddapah and Bangalore. The total kilometre covered is 255 kms. and the total cost allocated to this project comes roughly to Rs. 1,000 crore. I convey thanks to Laluji and also to Veluji and Rathwaji. I would also like to thank the staff of the Railway Ministry for giving this particular line because it mainly covers the backward and naxal affected areas.

16.00 hrs.

I take liberty now to say this and convey thanks to our hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy also has come forward to give his contribution of 50 per cent for this new line.

[Shri A. Sai Prathap]

With regard to my constituency development works, particularly with regard to my specific region, I would like to say that - the total length of Madanapalli-Dharmavaram gauge conversion work is 277 kms. The allocation last year was Rs. 85 crore and this year it is Rs. 86.93 crore. The required amount is another Rs. 42 crore; with this amount, we can get this line completed. It is a long pending desire of the people of this backward area. Shri Laluji also promised that this gauge conversion will be completed within three years; three years have already passed. So, the information that I received from the officials is that they are in a position to spend this amount of Rs. 86 crore that has been allotted, within six months' time. So, I request the hon. Minister to note down this point because this line will connect Guntakal Junction.

Another point is, the doubling patch work between Renigunta and Gooty. This is a revenue generating line. Here, the distance of another only 151 kms. is to be covered. This time, the allocation is only Rs. 71 crore and I request the hon. Minister to do something here. Now, RVNL has taken up this matter - doubling work is pending, electrification is pending; it is being mentioned in this House for the last ten years; I have been taking up this matter of completion of doubling work between Renigunta and Gooty.

Krishnapatnam-Obulavaripalli is a new line that has come up. The State Government has come forward. The National Mineral Development Corporation has also come forward along with RVNL; they are going to complete this project in a fixed time frame. I am thankful that they have considered this and given an amount of Rs. 25 crore in this Budget.

I propose a few new lines for survey. One is from Proddatur; Nandyala-Yerraguntala line is also going to be completed. An allocation of only Rs. 35 crore has been made, whereas the required amount is Rs. 150 crore. So, I request the hon. Minister to allot more funds. He has assured last time in this House that Rs. 50 crore will be given in the next Budget. I seek that difference of Rs. 20 crore or Rs. 25 crore be allotted to this on-going project.

It is again a shorter route towards coastal Andhra Pradesh and also it can touch the north side, to carry particularly cement and steel. This is one of the important lines. I would request the hon. Minister to do the survey of line Proddatur-Mydukur-Badvel-Nellore. There are 4-5 Assembly segments here; in backward and naxal affected area. Suppose if the hon. Minister considers these proposals for survey of new lines, we would be highly thankful to him.

Again, Muddanur-Pulivendula-Kadiri-Dharmavaram line may be surveyed so that the Royalaseema region network will be completed with the survey of two new lines.

Finally, I would like to bring to your notice that all the MPs from Andhra Pradesh are most unhappy because the allocations last year was not up to the mark and this year also, it is the same thing. All of us, with the Convenor of Andhra Pradesh Shri Vittal Rao went to meet Madam Sonia Gandhiji and represented that Andhra Pradesh should be given some importance because last year also, the allocation had not been up to the expectation.

The Andhra Pradesh Government has referred more than 35 projects out of which hardly four or five have been considered. I would request the hon. Minister to give importance to Andhra Pradesh network also in comparison to other States like Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and other adjacent States.

Kakinada is one of the important industrially growing regions having three major gas finds of India which hold tremendous gas reserves. In the year 2001 Kakinada was considered for bringing into the main railway line. So far allocation has not been given to this particular growing town. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this. Kakinada-Pithapuram the on-going main railway project be granted at least Rs. 25 crore.

I wish to bring to the kind notice of the hon. Minister that there is one railway station in Cuddapah District by the name Nandalure. Earlier a loco shed was there in Nandalure. It also has 500 acres of railway property. All the required infrastructure is there in Nandalure. The young people have agitated to get a traction shed in the existing available infrastructure at Nandalure. More than 75 to 100 young people agitated for 72 days. S/Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy, Gurudas Dasgupta and Yerrannaidu have visited that place. Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy had brought a delegation to the hon. Minister in this regard. The hon. Minister on the floor of the House assured that if not the traction shed a goods repairing unit will be given to Nandalure. One year has passed since then. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this demand of the people of Nandalure. Rayalaseema is a backward region. A few people will get the jobs. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this demand of the young people who have agitated for 72 days for it.

The RPF people have given a representation. Out of 13 points I would like to cover only four.

1. Productivity linked bonus should be given to RPF personnel at par with other railway staff since RPF is also treated to be railway employees for all purposes as per RPF Act.

2. Limited departmental competition tests should be implemented to RPF subordinate officers at par with other railway employees.

3. The tenure of staff and officers should be revamped as per the old system that is five and four years at one station.

4. The Standing Order No. 70 should be changed in which the tenures and postings of RPF staff are modified and the transfer of staff, that is constables and head constables, should be within the same Division.

Our convenor is asking to restore the Garib Rath. I would request the hon. Minister to consider all these points mentioned by me. I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak.

[Translation]

*SHRI PARAS NATH YADAV (Jaunpur): Sir, India stands second to China in terms of population. At the time of Independence, the population of India was 35 crore. Today the population of the country has crossed 100 million. On the other hand, India is also a land of rivers, mountains and forests. Not only there are difficulties in commuting from one place to another in the country but also a lot of time is taken.

Railway is considered to be the cheapest, easiest and the most convenient mode of transportation for the public. Otherwise also, train is considered to be the easiest mode of transportation for the poor people. First train in India was run in Mumbai, Maharashtra. With a view to rapidly expand railways in the country and providing this facility to each and every one, the provision for presenting a separate rail budget on the lines of general budget was made in our country. Rail budget is a part of the general budget itself. Each year a number of new railway projects are sanctioned and budget is provided for the same but with much regret, I have to say that due to non sanction of funds a number of projects remain incomplete.

Due to the regional considerations by Railway Ministers during the last two decades, the railways could not reach each corner of the country. Not only this much, there are many important places where railway lines have been laid but no stoppage has been provided for the trains due to which the passengers are unable to be benefited from the same.

Through you, I would like to urge the hon. Railway Minister to take some measures to solve the following problems :-

1. The sanctioned projects should be completed on time.

2. Railway lines should be laid on priority basis in those areas of the country where there are no railway lines.

3. The trains originating from the national capital should compulsorily be provided stoppage at each State capital and district headquarters of State from where they pass.

4. Keeping in view the population of the country unreserved fast trains should be introduced for the poor people.

5. The standard of catering facility being provided in the trains should be improved.

Sir, I would like to make a special request to the hon. Railway Minister to address certain problems of my constituency. The following trains should be provided halt at the Jaunpur city railway station in Jaunpur district:-

1. Kashiraj Express should be provided a halt at the Jaunpur city station.

2. A fast train should be run from Jaunpur to Mumbai via Allahabad.

3. ROBs should be constructed at Jagdishpur railway crossing and at Chandpur railway crossing on the Jaunpur-Mirzapur road in the city.

4. All the unmanned level crossings on the Jaunpur-Allahabad line should be converted immediately into manned ones in the larger public interest.

5. There is an urgent need of manned level crossing at the Sukhlalganj crossing.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Paras Nath Yadav]

6. Halt should be provided for Godan Express at Barsadhi railway station in the public interest.

In the end, through the House, I request the hon. Railway Minister that the said demands should be fulfilled in this Railway Budget itself the in larger public interest.

*SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM (Krishnagiri): Hon'ble Sir, I would like to thank Hon'ble Railway Minister for presenting this year's Railway Budget as a growth oriented people's Budget. Our Government has not increased either the passenger fares or the freight charges consecutively for the past five years. I would like to thank him and congratulate the Railways for this feat on behalf of Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam. The profits for this year is Rs. 20000 crores and more is expected to cross 25000 crores of rupees. Many new schemes and projects to improve the performance of the Railways have been spelt out in the Budget. New Railway Line to a stretch of 350 Kms. has been announced. Gauge conversion to the tune of about 2150 Kms, and laying of double lines to a length of 1000 Kms. have been announced in this Budget.

Fare reduction for various classes of travel, 5% freight charges reduction for the transportation of petrol and diesel, 1.4% reduction in the movement of goods for construction industry to help bring down the construction costs are welcome features of this Budget. Ten more Garib Rath Trains have been introduced to extend Air-conditioned coach facilities to the poorer sections of the society and the lower middle class also. Revolutionary changes have been brought about in Advance Reservation System. Booking of tickets through mobile phones and E-ticketing through cyber kiosks have helped reducing the long queue of people gathering in Reservation Counters. I welcome on behalf of DMK, the announcement regarding the setting up of a new rail coach factory in Kerala to help reduce the problem of shortage of rail coaches. Steps must also be taken to replace old coaches with new ones. The decision to regularize the services of the porters as Gangmen and group 'D' Staff in the railways is commendable. Travel concessions announced for AIDS patients and Ashok Chakra Award winners are praiseworthy as a humanitarian gesture. Students are provided with free railway passes and it is commendable. It has been announced in this year's Budget that women will also be inducted in the Railway Protection Force and I welcome it. Velacherry to St. Thomos Mount Metro Rail Project is to be completed by 2010 and it is anxiously awaited and gladly welcomed. These deadlines have not been met earlier and have caused hardship to the public and hence I urge upon the Railways to ensure the completion of the project on time. This also gives rise to cost escalation. I request the Hon'ble Minister that enough of funds may be released and the works may be completed as decided now.

Many of the coaches are lacking in sanitation and are found unclean. Proper cleaning up and sprucing up must be done. There are complaints about the non-functioning of lights and fans in the coaches. Appropriate measures in this regard may be taken up. In some trains like Rajdhani and Shatabdi and in some stations, the Public Address System do not function properly. This may kindly be looked into by the Railway Authorities. There is a welcome announcement in the Budget that loco workshop in Perambur will be modernized. Let me appreciate and welcome this announcement of our Hon'ble Railway Minister. I also urge upon you to complete this modernization project this year itself.

Fulfilling a long felt demand, Salem Division has been carved out recently in the Sixteeth year of our independence. Hon'ble Railway Minister himself took part in the inaugural function amidst cheers from all sections of the society. On behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu and on behalf of DMK, I would like to thank Hon'ble Minister for Railways Shri Lalu Prasad. I would like to point out that staff strength is very less in the New Divisional Head Quarters in Salem. Augmenting staff strength and construction of Divisional Headquarters building to house the staff may be taken up at the earliest.

Rail Travelling Public are worried often done to late running of trains. This delayed departures and arrivals must end. Proper care must be taken to ensure that trains are operated as per schedule. If trains are running late, passengers must be adequately compensated. Dilapidated rail coaches may be discontinued and put to disuse periodically. Long distance passengers have to bear the brunt of coaches that are old and lack in basic amenities. I urge upon the Hon'ble Railway Minister to go in for quality steel to make rust free coaches and ensure timely replacement of coaches. Secunderabad, Mumbai, Delhi and Patna stations are to be modernized to get world class new look. I urge upon the Railway Minister to give a similar face lift to Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore stations also. Chennai Central links the South of India with the North, West, East and also North-East. It handles lakhs of passengers every day. Hence I urge

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

upon you to make these two stations world class ones linking one with the other.

I welcome the step in the right direction to open two divisional hospitals. Chennai Central hospital in Perambur is faced with the problem of space crunch. Old buildings are there and there is a crying need to expand this Railway Hospital with more space and modern amenities. Requesting you to renovate the same in time while providing modern equipment. The Budget for the year 2008-2009 is remarkable in so many ways. But still our long demand to link Jolarpet with Hosur has not been taken up. I am reiterating this demand for the fourth time now. I have handed over a memorandum myself in this regard to the Hon'ble Railway Minister. Jolarpet can be linked to Hosur via Thiruppathur, Kanthili, Bargur, Kanthikuppam and Sholagiri. This new railway line may kindly be approved and taken up. Hosur is an emerging industrial city. It is a growing Technology city. Hosur is near to Bangalore and hence more of rail link needs to be established. More trains must be introduced.

Catering service in the long distance trains in particular must be taken care of. Quality food must be made available. Standard Catering service is essential in the running of trains. Inspection teams must be set up to go in for quality checks. I urge upon the Railway Minister to look into this.

Garib Rath Trains are more popular now and attract more passengers. They are running to capacity almost every time. Chennai-Delhi Garib Rath Train meets with full reservation made in advance many a times. The frequency of this train must be increased. This once-a-week train must be made thrice-a-week train to benefit more passengers. There is also an urgent need to provide Pantry-Car facility in Garib Rath trains to facilitate the aged passengers alongwith women and children. As they are long distance trains, the inconvenience caused to the passengers in the absence of a pantry-car are one too many. I request you to look into it.

Ladies among the senior citizens are to get 50% concession enhanced from the existing 30%. This must be extended to both men and women without any discrimination. I urge upon you to look into this.

Our Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Kalaignar has submitted a set of demands to our Hon'ble Railway Minister. Madurai-Bodinaickanur gauge conversion is one among those demands which is pending for long. Linking up Erode-Palani, Chennai-Puducherry via Cuddalore and also laying of Villupuram-Dindigul double line, laying of Thiruvallur-Arakkonam fourth line are among those demands. Our leader Dr. Kalaignar has thanked the Hon'ble Railway Minister for conceding to his demand to link Jolarpet with Thiruvannamalai. I would like to record in this august House our heartfelt thanks conveyed on behalf of our leader.

For the past many years, Chennai Central has not been linked with Chennai Egmore though demands and announcements in this regard have always been there. On behalf of people from various walks of life, I urge upon the Railway Minister to concede to our long pending demand.

I thank the Chair on my own behalf and on behalf of our party DMK. Let me conclude my speech expressing our support to this laudable Railway Budget for the year 2008-2009.

[English]

SHRI L. GANESAN (Tiruchirappalli): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in this discussion. E M Foster the great thinker once said, 'three cheers for democracy' and in the same vein I wish to express three cheers to Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and his ablest colleagues, particularly Shri Velu. This is because this is the age of enhancement; this is the age of increase and prices are increasing everywhere. Communal clashes are increasing. So many things are increasing whereas Shri Laluji has not enhanced fares or freights. Therefore, the first cheer is for not enhancing the fares and freights. The second cheer is for not only enhancing the fares and freights but for slightly reducing them. The third cheer is because he has taken so much efforts and given many considerations without enhancing the fares and freights, and he has enhanced the conveniences and comforts of the passengers.

I congratulate him for having resolved to implement new schemes and projects such as laying new lines, extending some old lines, adding new train services in the existing lines. The projects and proposals which deserve congratulations and commendations are as follows.

Firstly, there is the project to set up new Rail Coach Factory in Kerala for which the Kerala State Government has made 1000 acres of land available for this factory. Secondly, there is a proposal to set up new wagon

[Shri L. Ganesan]

reconstruction unit at Garkha. Thirdly, there is a proposal to modernize Lilluah Workshop in West Bengal, Perambur Workshop in Tamil Nadu and Ajmer Loco Workshop and lastiy, there is a proposal to modernize Jamalpur Workshop. It is really laudable that our Minister, Shri Laluji has announced 53 new trains in which Tamil Nadu has a major share of eight trains. There is a proposal for extension in services of 16 pair trains in which Tamil Nadu gets six. In 2008-09, four new lines are to be constructed in which Tamil Nadu gets one.

In the on-going gauge conversion also, Tamil Nadu is not ignored. Tamil Nadu is also taken care of in the proposals for new lines for gauge conversion.

Many welfare measures are implemented and are resolved to be taken up anew for implementation which are in toto aimed for the welfare of the people at large, the passengers in particular and the Railway employees in specific.

Sir, so far, I was talking in general but now I wish to be specific. I am the Member of Parliament from Trichy, Tamil Nadu. I have been representing my constituency through letters, in person and in Parliament. I thank the Railway Minister and the UPA Government for having complied with my requests and persuasions. I now appeal to kindly comply with my following requests.

It is already agreed to implement ROB constructions near Trichy Railway Junction, Tiruvanaikoil and Oyamari Burial Ground. Please give administrative sanction and implement them expeditiously.

Sir, I thank you for constructing ROBs. But at the same time, it is very bad in principle and in practice to close down level crossings. ROBs no doubt are helpful for vehicular traffic like cars and so on. But for the sake of people carrying heavy head loads or dead bodies, people on bicycles and people who walk or pedestrians, level crossings near the ROBs should never be closed down. If it is done, it leads to a lot of suffering for the masses. I would like to mention specifically about three level crossings, one each at Palakkarai, Pichandarkoil and Ramakrishna ROB. They should be opened. Maintaining them will not cost much. When we compare it with several lakh crore of rupees that we earn and spend in Railways it is a paltry sum. I pray that they should be opened and operated.

I pray that a new train from Trichy to Madurai should be introduced. Both of them are very important cities, holy cities. People, in several lakhs, are coming and going every day. Therefore, I appeal to the Minister to introduce one train in the morning, say around 6 in the morning from Trichy to Madurai; and one train in the evening, around 6 p.m.

When we talk of new lines, I am surprised about one thing. A new line from Tanjore to Pattukottai was to be constructed. Survey was also done in those good old days, soon after India became Independent. The distance is hardly 30 miles. ... *(Interruptions)*.

If that connection is given, it will extend up to Rameswaram. Great personalities like Shri S.D. Somasundaram once the M.P. of Thanjavur constituency. Shri M. Palanimanickam, the hon. Minister of State for Finance is present M.P. of Thanja. In spite of that, it has not been done.

Finally, I wish to give a fitting reply to some of the adverse comments made by some people. One of such adverse critics of the Railway Budget is a fiery orator. He said that Tamil Nadu has been ignored. He said that southern part of Tamil Nadu has been ignored. He is a fiery orator only. But he has been blinded. He is a man with blurred vision. If he has seen the Budget, out of 53 new trains, Tamil Nadu got eight; out of 16 pair trains that have been announced, Tamil Nadu got one; out of four new lines that have been announced, Tamil Nadu got one; out of the three workshops that have been announced for modernisation, Tamil Nadu got one. Therefore, I would say that Tamil Nadu has been taken care of.

With all heart, mind and soul, I appreciate, I admire, I congratulate, I commend Shri Lalu Prasad and his ablest colleagues.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for providing an opportunity to speak. I would like to express my views with regard to the railway budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister Shri Lalu Yadav. With deep regret, I have to say that justice has not been done to the largest and the border State of Rajasthan in the country in the budget. Rajasthan has got only four new trains in this election based budget in which 53 new trains have been announced, 10 Garib Raths have been introduced and the frequency of 11 trains has been increased. Apart

from this, neither frequency of the trains plying there has been increased nor has any train been extended. This shows how this election based budget has benefited only Bihar and some other States having UPA Govt. Through you, I want to say that States like Rajasthan having Opposition party rule have been grossly neglected. Giving four new trains for such a State is like a drop in the ocean. Hon. Minister has said that he has given a budget with a profit of Rs. 25,000 crore. I welcome the budget for taking care of all the sections of the society by not increasing the fares but the renovation of the infrastructure of the Railways, on which the safety and future of the whole of the railways set-up depends, has been deleted from the priority list. There are railway tracks and railway bridges which are more than 100 years old and have become dilapidated and worn out. This is resulting in derailment while doing shunting or crossing the railway bridges. The danger of accidents is always present due to the weakened tracks. No attention has been paid towards this. Rolling stock and infrastructure of the railways have been exploited to the hilt which can result in a very serious situation. As per CAG's report, about 300 projects are pending in the railways. It seems as if these projects have been forgotten. Linking of Pushkar with Ajmer was announced in the year 2001-02 but nothing has happened till now. Railways had made commitment to construct this line by 2009 and Rs. 19 crore have been earmarked for it while more funds should have been provided for the purpose in the budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Since five minutes' time has been fixed for all the hon. Members, therefore, conclude your point soon.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: I would like to speak about the railway factory in Ajmer. A provision of Rs. 200 crore has been made for the Lilua factory, Perambur Loco factory and Ajmer Loco factory in the budget. Provision for Ajmer is Rs. 52 crore but only Rs. 15 lakh out of that have been allocated. The Loco and Railway Factory of Ajmer is the spine of the Railways but a provision of only Rs. 52 crore and allocation of Rs. 15 lakh is too little allocation. There is need to increase it. During his visit to Ajmer, hon. Minister had made an announcement that the Ajmer station would be made an international level railway station. I checked this budget again and again but nothing is there in this regard though hon. Railway Minister is devoted to Ajmer and goes there regularly. The Ratlam-Khandwa metre gauge line is to be converted into broad gauge. Though, it has been approved but very little money has been sanctioned for it. Earlier, there used to be many trains from Ajmer to Khandwa which further went upto Purna and Kachiguda. Lakhs of people come to Ajmer from Hyderabad and Andhra Pradesh for Ziarat but they have to take a long detour. Hyderabad can be connected directly to Ajmer if this part of metre gauge line is converted into broad gauge. There was a proposal to connect Pushkar with Medta for connecting Western Rajasthan and Central Rajasthan with Ajmer but no provision has been made for that in this budget. You had made an announcement last year that a survey would be conducted for the Ajmer, Kota via Kekri, Devli line. This survey has also been completed and people were hoping for an announcement from you for construction of a railway line for connecting Ajmer with Kota. But, there is no such announcement. We have demanded that few more trains should be introduced on the Ajmer-Chhittorgarh-Kota line till this railway line is constructed. It seem that the hon. Minister has forgotten this. I want that the train between Ratlam-Indore-Udaipur should be extended upto Ajmer so that people are benefited. People from Ajmer would be able to travel to and from Indore which is the economic capital of Madhya Pradesh. Earlier, many trains used to run between Khandwa and Ajmer but many of them have been discontinued now.

The train between Amritsar and Jaipur should be extended upto Ajmer. Agra Fort and Ajmer are historical cities. There is a train between Agra and Jaipur which should be extended upto Ajmer. There was a train from Agra Fort earlier also. Rathwaji is sitting here and he knows that the train from Ahmedabad to Agra Fort was very popular and it used to run between Ajmer and Jaipur via Mewar Junction. This line has been converted into broad gauge from metre gauge but no train has been started resulting in great inconvenience to the people. I, therefore, demand that this train should be started.

A train should also be introduced from Ajmer to Chennai and Ajmer to Guwahati. A special train is plying between Ajmer and Chennai and it would be better for the people of Ajmer if it is run daily. You have provided Rs. 950 crore to Central Rajasthan for infrastructure and old projects. This fund has been given for railway line in Shekhawati or for various schemes of other areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now please wind up, if some points have been left, lay them on the table of the House.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Modernization of railways, completion of incomplete schemes, replacing of tracks, strengthening of bridges and repair of signals should be done speedily to prevent accidents.

Chain pulling often taken place in trains. Passengers pull the chain to stop the train at any place. Besides, incidents of looting of passengers by giving them poisonous or sedative-laced food often came to light. Therefore, attention should be given to ensure safety in railways. Due attention is not being paid towards safety, security and punctuality.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now. Otherwise, I am going to call the next hon. Member.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: I will take only one minute more. The mail train running between Haridwar and Ahmedabad is always behind the schedule by an hour or two. Earlier this train used to run between Delhi and Ahmedabad, then it was made to run upto Haridwar. My demand is to extend this train upto Ajmer. Punctuality should be observed in running of trains. Besides, safety and security should also be given due consideration. Due to paucity of time, I will lay the rest of my speech regarding problems pertaining to my constituency on the table of the House.

*Sir, I would like to express my views on the Railway Budget presented by the Minister of Railways.

Sir, I am sorry to say that justice has not been done to the State of Rajasthan—the largest in area and a border State. In this populist and pro-election budget, 53 new trains and 10 Garib raths have been introduced and frequency of 11 trains has been increased. However, giving only 4 new trains to Rajasthan is just like a drop in the Ocean. Neither the frequency of the trains which stop in Rajasthan has been increased nor any train has been extended. Neglecting Rajasthan in such a manner is unjustified from any point of view.

Sir, the hon. Minister while presenting the budget claiming a profit of 25 thousand crore has neither increased the fare nor freight and taken care of railway employees and people from all sections of society. For this he deserves accolades but in this face-lifting of Railways, the issue of infrastructure on which lies the strength, safety and future of railways, has been ignored completely. It is not fair. The rolling stock and infrastructure of Railways has been used upto the maximum extent which could lead to an Alarming situation later on. Railway bridges and tracks are more than 50-100 years old and have outlived their life span causing derailment of goods trains at various places. Therefore, I would like to state that utmost attention should be paid for rejuvenation of railways.

Sir, the future of the railways as well as that of nation depends upon the internal strength of the Railways. This budget is not going to improve the condition of railways. The hon. Minister of Railways has boasted of the achievements made during the last four years. He has shown a rosy picture of future also. He has given sops to all sections but unfortunately nothing substantial has been given for Railways.

Sir, there are 14 lakh employees in railways, however, only those employees who have high access would get the benefit of the Staff Benefit Fund Scheme for which massive increase has been made. The hon. Minister has announced an increase in the bonus also but let me remind him that a part of the last year's bonus is yet to be paid.

Although Fare has been reduced but not for the ordinary class in which poor people travel. The fare reduced in other categories is a mere show off. The fare for upper class is too high that it has to be reduced to increase the occupancy in this class.

Sir, earlier a safety fund was there for improving infrastructure. That has lapsed and a surcharge of 8 per cent has been included in the fare. However, things will not improve till a dedicated fund is established.

New trains have been announced but the backlog will continue to increase. It will be cleared only when the basic infrastructure is made up to the mark.

Sir, in the budget there is a mention of a dedicated freight corridor scheme but there is a need to formulate a concrete plan and fixing a deadline in this regard.

Earlier, the freight was contributing upto 80% in the railways income but now it has been dropped to 25%

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*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

only. Similarly, sufficient funds have been given for passenger amenities but its non utilization is unfortunate. There is a need to pay proper attention towards the dirty coaches, menace of mosquitoes, stinking toilets, lack of sanitation, lack of cleanliness at platforms, availability of potable water, sitting facilities, maintenance of waiting rooms, chain snatching, loss of baggage, incidents of looting of passengers by sedating them, delay in running of short distance trains, chain pulling, habit of travelling without ticket by passengers, unavailability of good quality food, irregularities in reservation etc. and to punctuality, safety and security.

Railway's rejuvenation drive has been kept out of the priority list for which history will never forgive him.

Sir, there is a specific need to modernize the railways network to complete the pending schemes, to replace the weak bridges and tracks and to modernize/update the signal system.

As per CAG's report, there are approx. 300 pending railway projects which should be completed within the stipulated time frame by mobilizing funds/resources. Otherwise construction cost thereof would continue to escalate and the funds spent so far will not prove fruitful.

Sir, encouraging minoritism on the basis of religion, making 'urdu' language as a medium of examination is not justified as people of other languages will also start fighting for their rights.

1. Sir, I would now like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister towards the demands of my constituency. At the time of inauguration of the Ajmer-Chittorgarh broadguage line, the hon. Minister of Railways had announced that Ajmer station would be upgraded to a world class station. But, unfortunately, he did not keep his word while formulating the current budget. I would like to urge him to upgrade the Ajmer station to a world class station and provide necessary facilities and infrastructure for his purpose.

2. Sir, Ajmer-Pushkar rail line is likely to be completed by the year 2009. A provision of Rs. 19 crores has been kept in the budget for this purpose. This amount should be increased to ensure quick completion of the work. Survey for Pushkar-Merta rail line has been carried out many times the construction of this rail line should be sanctioned to link Ajmer with Western Rajasthan and border areas.

3. Sir, gauge conversion of Ajmer-Ratlam line has been carried out. Earlier, many pairs of trains used to run between Ajmer and Khandwa when the line was metre-gauge. In fact, trains used to run on metre gauge from Ajmer to Kachiguda (Hyderabad) also. But now, it is neither fish nor fowl. Hence, Ratlam-Khandwa metre gauge line should be converted into broad gauge and also extended upto Kachiguda and then a train covering the entire stretch should be started.

4. Sir, an announcement has been made in the budget that Udaipur-Delhi Chetak Express would be run on broad gauge via Ajmer-Neem Ka Thana. But it would be more beneficial if this train is run via Ajmer-Jaipur-Alwar. If not, then another train should be run from Udaipur to Delhi via Chittorgarh-Bhilwara-Ajmer-Jaipur.

5. Sir, a metre gauge train had been running from Ahmedabad-Agra fort via Marwad Junction-Ajmer-Jaipur-Bandi Kui-Achnera-Bharatpur for many years. It was stopped when the gauge conversion work going on. Now that this entire track been converted into broad gague this popular train should be started again so that Western Uttar Pradesh could be directly linked to Rajasthan. Till the time this is done, the Jaipur-Agra Fort–Gwalior Intercity should be extended upto Udaipur via Ajmer. This would benefit the tourists and also be economically viable.

6. Sir, Jaipur-Amritsar train should be extended upto Ajmer so that pilgrims to Radha Saomi Satsang, Beas, Golden Temple and Durga Mata Temple are facilitated. This is also a long standing demand.

7. An express train used to ply on metre gauge line from Ahmedabad to Delhi via Abu Road. It was also stopped at the time of gauge conversion. Now that the entire route is being converted into broad gauge and doubling of tracks is also being carried out, this train is also being re-started. It would also be a very useful and profit making train.

8. Sir, through you, I would also like to request that passenger trains should be run between

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

Ajmer-Ratlam, Ajmer-Delhi and Ajmer-Mehsana so that passengers from interior areas and small stations are also benefited.

9. Ajmer-Chennai Holiday Special train is run during the summer season. This train should be run on a regular basis. Similarly, Ajmer-Hyderabad via Ahmedabad and Surat, Ajmer-Trivandrum and Guwahati trains should also be run regularly so that the famous pilgrim place Ajmer Sharif and Pushkar also get linked to South East India.

10. The Railway Minister has decided to modernize the locomotive factories which are the backbone of Ajmer's economy. Accordingly, higher budget provisions should be made for the purpose. The Minister has made a provision of Rs. 200 crores for modernization of locomotive factories in Lilua (West Bengal), Perumbur and Ajmer. Out of this, it is proposed to grant Rs. 52 crore for locomotive factories in Ajmer. But, in this budget merely Rs. 15 lakh have been sanctioned for the purpose which is too meagre an amount. This amount should be increased so that modernization is carried-out in an effective manner. Similarly, the amount of funds announced for the carriage shop should be increased.

11. All facilities should be made available in divisional hospital, Ajmer.

12. Construction of parks, repair of roads and proper repair of houses in railway colonies should be carried-out.

13. Railways-run middle schools should be upgraded to the level of senior secondary schools.

14. Nasirabad, Kishanganj, Mayurganj, Vijaynagar, Byawar stations should be upgraded and basic facilities should be provided therein.

15. Delhi-Ahmedabad (Super Ashram Express) trains should be given a two minute stoppage at Byawar station.

16. Garib Rath should be given a stoppage at the famous industrial city and commercial centre, Byawar.

17. Frequency of Udaipur, Ajmer, Kolkata (Sealdah) train should be increased.

18. The trains being run after gauge conversion should be provided stoppages at atleast two or three stations at which trains run on metre gauge used to have stoppages.

19. Status-quo should be maintained regarding the reservation quota of trains that go through Vijayanagar, Nasirabad, Beawar, Kishangarh and Ajmer.

20. Railways' Budget hotels and rest houses should be constructed on empty plots of land in Ajmer in view of the importance of the place.

21. Basic infrastructure and facilities should be provided for zonal/national level sports activities.

22. Better management of railway institutions should be ensured. The facilities in such institutions should be upgraded.

23. I, through you, would like to thank the Railway Minister for announcing that watchmen would be appointed for all unmanned railway crossings in future. Even so, I would like to reiterate my request that watchmen should be soon appointed to man the railway crossings at Lamana, Makreda, Nyara, Daata, Muhami, Lacchipura, Rajouri, Hadundi etc. for the convenience of farmers and to ensure smooth traffic.

24. I have a final request, that in view of heavy pedestrian and vehicular traffic in Topghada, Gulabbadi, Nakamdar, Badaliya Road and Jonesganj in Ajmer, Vijaynagar Railway crossing, Beawar, Bhil Road and Beawar Pesang Road near Beawar station and near Mogalia railway station, sanction should be given for construction of ROB or RUB at these places.

25. The construction of ROB at Kishangarh Apangarh Road near Kishangarh railway station for which sanction has been given should be completed.

26. The TT, train drivers, guards who are employed in Ajmer division should be given priority in all trains that stop in Ajmer division.

27. Many cases of compassionate appointment are pending/in the waiting list or undecided. These cases should be decided soon and appointments offered while a compassionate person like you is the railway minister.

28. Stations such as Kishangarh and Beawar are important from point of view of trade, population, industry etc. Hence, all trains passing through these stations should have a stoppage of at least a minute or two at these stations.

29. Beawar and Kishangarh stations should be upgraded. They should be developed as model stations.

30. Dorai and Madar stations should be developed to facilitate loading and unloading of goods and to ease the congestion at Ajmer station.

31. Construction of the Bangad Gram Ras broad gauge rail line which was announced in the budget and accorded sanction should be completed at the earliest to facilitate loading of cement.

32. Number of ROBs at Beawar station should be increased for the convenience of passengers and civilian population and a road should be constructed near the station.*

[English]

*SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri): I bring to the kind notice of Hon'ble Minister of Railways through you for allotment of additional funds for Orissa in the budget for expediting the ongoing Railway projects in the State and inclusion of new projects in the Railway Budget 2008-2009 which have not been covered in the present Budget.

Sir, as in the past, Orissa which is ranked much below the national average in the Railway Map of India, has been discriminated upon and also neglected in the allotment of funds in the present Railway Budget even though the East Coast Railway and portion of South Eastern Railway which pass through the State of Orissa are major revenue earners for the Indian Railway. This is an unbalanced Budget which has not catered to the need of regional requirement and prospective Railway expanding Zone. Whereas captive thermal power plant have been proposed in the State of Bihar, new coach factory in Kerala, Wagon reconstruction in Garkha in Chapra Distt. of Bihar, allotment of Rs. 200 crore for modernisation of railway workshop in West Bengal and allotment of Rs. 80 crore at Jamalpur, no new project worth substance has been introduced in Orissa. No allotment has been made for the introduction of new projects in Orissa.

I thank through you to the Hon'ble Railway Minister for introducing a Garib Rath from Ranchi to Bhubaneswar in the last Railway Budget but Sir, this is not sufficient. I would request through you to the Hon'ble Railway Minister for more Trains from Puri-Bhubaneswar to New Delhi and Mumbai in the greater public interest.

Electrification

Sir, in the present Railway Budget no provision has been made for Rail Line Electrification in Orissa whereas during 11th Five Year Plan proposal for Electrification of 3500 kms of Railway Line has been made. During last Railway Budget 2007-08, I had requested through you to Hon'ble Railway Minister for allotment of Rs. 100 crore for the Electrification of the feeder links *viz.* Daitari-Banspani B.G. Link, Talcher-Sambalpur-Jharsuguda B.G. Link and Haridaspur-Paradeep B.G. Link. However, sufficient funds have not been allotted in the present Budget also. I would also request to the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you for allotment of sufficient funds for these projects and alongwith, Koraput-Rayagarh electrification project may be sanctioned in the Railway Budget 2008-09. Against the demand for electrification of Kharagpur-Nimapura-Bhubaneswar and Bhubaneswar-Kottavelasha (RVNL) only Rupees 2 crore and 1 crore has been sanctioned respectively in the Budget 2007-08 against the demand for Rupees 50 crore. Hence, the allotment may be increased to 50 crore in the Budget 2008-09.

Gauge Conversion

Sir, I would request through you to Hon'ble Railway Minister to increase the amount for expediting the gauge conversion from Rupsa to Bangiriposi which is very important as it was envisaged as an alternate to 3rd line between Kharagpur and Tatanagar and made into 2 phases, the first phase a gauge conversion of Rupsa-Bangiriposi and phase-2 connecting Bangiriposi with either Gorumahisani or Dollbhumgarh, which will subsequently connect to Tatanagar thereby reducing substantial distance. The allotment may be increased as the sanctioned amount of Rs. 40/- crore is not sufficient for this project. Nuapara-Gunupur route gauge conversion may be expedited and extension to be made upto Therubali and also sanction is needed to provide connectivity to Gopalpur Port. Allotment of Rs. 10.41 crore in the present Budget 2008-09 is not sufficient and I would request Hon'ble Railway Minister through you for increase this amount to Rs. 75 crore. Although broad gauge line of 2300 kms

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy]

will be completed during 2007-08 and 3500 during 2008-09, no substantial allotment has been made for the State of Orissa.

Ongoing New Lines

Sir, Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh B.G. Rail Link:—Sir, this project was sanctioned in the year 1993-94. Rs. 100 crores was demanded for commissioning the section between Lanjigarh Road-Bhawanipatana and commencement of land acquisition from Bhawanipatana to Junagarh. The Government of Orissa had demanded Rs. 120/- crore for the project, however only Rs. 34/- crore has been allotted in the present Budget which may be increased to Rs. 75/-crore.

Haridaspur-Paradip B.G. Link - Sir, only Rs. 80/- crores has been allotted in the present Budget for Haridaspur-Paradip B.G. Link in the Budget, however the state Government had demanded Rs. 175 crore. I would request the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you that the allotment may be increased to Rs. 175 crore.

Khurda Road-Bolongir B.G. Link:- Sir, only Rs. 32.43 crore has been allotted in the present Budget whereas the State Government had demanded Rs. 150 crore. I would request the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you that the allotment may be increased to Rs. 150 crore.

Angnl-Dubri-Sukinda Road B.G. Link: This Project was sanctioned in the year 1997-98. This rail link is critical for the steel industries since it will be a feeder link for transportation of coal to the industries in the Dubri area and iron ore to the industries in the districts of Cuttack, Dhenkanal and Jharsuguda. The allotment of Rs. 60 crore is meager and may be increased to Rs. 150 crore.

Talcher-Bimlagarh (154 Kms) - This Project has been sanctioned in the year 2004-05. The State Government had demanded Rs. 75 crore whereas Rs. 10 crore has been allotted. I would request the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you that the allotment may be increased to Rs. 75 crore.

Doubling of Existing Railway Lines: Sir, I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you for provisioning adequate funds for doubling of various Railway links in the State of Orissa. Particularly, I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you to increase the allotment for Doubling of Khurda Road-Puri Railway Line from Rs. 2 crore to Rs. 50 crore including the sanction of second phase work for which survey work was sanctioned in the last Budget 2007-08. This railway line is more then 100 years old and eight years of first phase work for doubling should be expedited in view of the importance of Puri as an international Tourism point.

Sir, I request through you to Hon'ble Railway Minister to include the following proposals for survey for new lines in the Budget of 2008-09:-

(a) Conversion and Extension of Nuapada-Gunupur B.G. Rail Link to Theruvali (79 Kms.)

Traffic survey was made in March, 1999 for extension of the converted Nuapada-Gunupur B.G. Rail Link to Theruvali with a favourable rate of return. This extension will immensely benefit flow of import and export of cargo via-Gopalpur Port.

(b) Jeypore-Malkangiri (117 Kms.)

This broad-gauge rail link for which a survey report has been submitted to Ministry of Railways forms a part of the most backward districts of Orissa *i.e.* KBK area, which has been accorded special status by Government of India for speedy development. This requires immediate implementation.

(c) Talcher-Gopalpur (245 Kms.)

The survey report of Talcher-Gopalpur Broad-gauge Rail Link line submitted to Ministry of Railways indicated a favourable rate of return. The recent thrust of industrialization with setting up of a Steel, Power and Aluminium Plants would require a dedicated Railway link between Talcher to Gopalpur (Special Economic Zone) for export and import of raw material and finished products.

(d) Bargarh-Nuapada-Via-Padmapur (120 Kms)

Survey for this Broad-gauge Rail link was completed with a viable rate of return 18.32% and report submitted to the Ministry of Railways. Rail infrastructure in Western Orissa is not developed adequately despite a large number of industries are existing and heavy production of food grains are achieved. This B.G. Rail link will traverse through acutely backward areas of the State, and will ensure economic development.

(e) Puri-Konark (35 Kms.)

Puri attracts thousands of pilgrims due to temple of Lord Jagannath. The famous Sun Temple is located at Konark. This monument is famous throughout the world

and thronged by visitors from domestic and abroad. Considering these a survey was completed for construction of New B.G. Rail Link between Puri-Konark in the year 1997. This link will facilitate visits by the tourists and pilgrims to the last link of the golden triangle.

For Bargarh-Nuapada-Via-Padmapur (120 Kms) and Puri-Konark (35 Kms.) though for detailed survey has been announced in principle, no steps have been taken in this regard so far for sanction and construction and now also no funds have been allocated in the Current Budget for these two projects. Hence necessary sanction may be accorded for these projects in the Budget of 2008-09.

(f) Gopalpur-Rayagada (282 Kms)

All Bauxite deposits are located in Rayagada and Kalahandi area. Recently, Government of Orissa has signed number of Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) for setting up of Aluminium industries for production of Alumina and Aluminium. Sanction for a survey is imperative to cater to the traffic that will be generated.

(g) Jaleswar-Digha (40 Kms)

Digha is a popular beach resort, which will be connected from Tamluk. It is necessary that a survey be sanctioned from Jaleswar to Digha a stretch of 40 Kms. so that the vast areas in Bhogarai and Jaleswar Block can be connected. Although this project has been announced, no funds have been allocated so far.

(h) Jajpur Keonjhar Road-Jajpur (30 Kms.)

Biraja Khetra at Jajpur Town is a famous place of Piligrimage in India at Par with Dwaraka and Kasi. A large number of pilgrims visit this area regularly. The Ministry of Railways is requested to sanction a survey for extension of the East Coast Railway line from Jajpur-Keonjhar Road to Jajpur.

(i) Gorumahisani to Buramara (35 Kms.)

Work is in progress for gauge conversion of Rupsa-Bangiriposi N.G. Rail Link. A survey may be sanctioned for linking Gorumahisani on Tata-Badamapahar B.G. Rail Link to Buramara on Rupsa-Bangiriposi Rail Link.

(j) Badampahar to Keonjhar (70 Kms.)

A survey needs to be sanctioned between Badampahar to Keonjhar which shall link the rich iron ore area with Tatanagar.

(k) Sambalpur-Berhampur via Birmaharajpur (408 Kms.)

Presently a direct rail link from Western to Southern Orissa is not available. Transportation of goods and passengers have to move in a circuitous way via Raipur-Vizianagaram or the East Coast Rail Link.

(l) Bolangir-Nawapara (159 Kms.)

Bolangir and Nawapara are extremely backward districts of Orissa, covered under the KBK districts, which has been accorded special status by Government of India. Availability of Railway infrastructure shall lead to economic growth.

(m) Banspani-Bimlagarh (80 Kms.)

Keonjhar and Sundargarh districts are iron ore hub of Orissa. With rapid industrialization a network of railway links shall cater to the transportation requirement of that area.

(n) Berhampur to Phulbani (169.8 Kms.)

A preliminary Engineering-cum Traffic Survey was conducted in 2003. Phulbani is one of the extremely backward districts of Orissa, though endowed with large deposits of Granite, Graphite, Quartz, Manganese and Bauxite. Sanction of requisite funds may be made for commencement and completion of the project.

The following extension and introduction of New Trains may be introduced.

Sir, I would like to thank the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you for extension and introduction of New Trains, *viz*, Bhubaneswar-Mumbai via Sambalpur (bi-weekly), Puri-Darbhangha Express (Weekly), Paradeep-Bhubaneswar Express (Daily in lieu of Paradeep-Cuttack Passenger), Kendujhargarh-Puri Express (Daily). However, the Paradeep-Bhubaneswar Express may be extended upto Puri considering it as a Pilgrimage Centre.

The following introduction and extension of trains requires attention:

[Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy]

Super- fast Express from Sambalpur to Allahabad

There is no direct train from Sambalpur to Allahabad in order to meet the growing demand of traffic from Western Orissa. To enable the people of Western Orissa to visit important places of pilgrimage like Allahabad, the extended train No. 8611/8612 may be further extended upto Allahabad.

Inter City Express between Koraput and Rourkela Via-Rayagada

The Raipur-Vizianagram-Koraput-Kirandul B.G. rail link passes through the most backward areas of the State like Koraput-Bolangir and Sundargarh. An Inter City Express linking Rourkela with these areas of this State will give the much needed impetus for business and commerce of the area.

Express Train from Titilagarh to Puri *via* Sambalpur

Presently there is no direct train from Titilagarh area to cater the needs of Western Orissa. Introduction of Express Train on this route will provide relief to the people and also ensure emotional, social integration with costal Orissa.

Express Train from Visakhapatnam to Howrah-Titlagarh, Raipur and Bilaspur

The area from Visakhapatnam to Titlagarh is backward and requires additional train services to ensure increase of commerce and trading with neighbouring States.

New Puri-Hyderabad Express and and New Puri-Chennai Express

There is no direct Train Link from pilgrim centre of Puri famous for Lord Jagannath to South India. Two direct trains from Puri-Hyaderabad and Puri-Chennai will fabulously benefit pilgrims of South India and people of Puri and Orissa.

Express Train between Baripada and Visakhapatnam *via* Balasore, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur

Baripada the district Headquarters of Mayurbhanj is now connected on the broad gauge system of Indian Railways. It is necessary to provide a direct link with Southern Orissa as of the Passenger amenities.

Express Train from Gandhidham to Puri

Orissa continues to provide human resources for industries in Gujarat. A large number of Oriyas are working in various part of Gujarat. An express train may be provided from Puri to Gandhidham *via* Vizinnagram.

Express Train from Keonjhar to Howrah

Keonjhar district has been connected in the Daitari-Banspani BG Rail link. A large number of the tribal population shall use the direct link for trade and commerce.

Super-fast Express from Puri-Jaipur

There is no direct train service from Puri (Orissa) to pink city of Jaipur (Rajasthan). Introduction of a Train Service from Puri-Jaipur, Via-Sambalpur and Raipur will enable tourists and pilgrims from Central and Western India to come to Orissa and this service will immensely benefit people of western Orissa.

Express Train from Barbil to Visakhapatnam via-Keonjhar and Bhubaneswar

The BG rail link between Banspani-Daltari is expected to be commissioned very soon. Keonjhar and Jajpur districts are undergoing rapid industrialization. Introduction of a train from Barbil to Visakhapatnam will facilitate movement of passengers and shall also be used for trade and commerce.

Express Train from Baripada to Howrah

Narrow gauge section between Rupsa to Baripada has been converted and commissioned. In order to strengthen the traditional link of the people of Mayurbhanj district with West Bengal and meet the aspirations of the people of that district, Ministry of Railways is requested for introduction of an express train from Baripada to Howrah.

Intercity Express between Jharsuguda and Bhubaneswar

The industrial scenario is fast changing with the large number of steel plants located in Jharsuguda and Sambalpur districts. Inadequate train services is a serious impediment for people of that area. Ministry of Railways is requested for introduction of an Inter-city Express between Jharsuguda and Bhubaneswar.

Super fast Express between Rourkela to New Delhi

The industrial and mining area of Sundargarh and Jharsuguda district are sparsely connected to New Delhi. Introduction of a direct train will be immensely popular facilitating travel of passengers from these districts.

Direct Train between Bhubaneswar-Chandigarh-Kalka

A large number of people of Orissa are employed in defence services and allied sectors in Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab. A super fast express may be introduced from Bhubaneswar to Chandigarh, which will also encourage tourism between Orissa and Himachal Pradesh.

Raigarh-Gondia Intercity Express to Jharsuguda

Extension of this train shall provide a direct link from Vidarbha region to Western Orissa.

Bilaspur-Raigarh passenger to Jharsuguda

Extension of this train will facilitate movement of passengers to a major part of Chhattisgarh.

Extension of Janshatabdi Express between Howrah and Borbil to Keonjhar

Daitari-Banspani BG rail link is expected to be commissioned very shortly. Keeping in view the aspirations of the people of Keonjhar and to facilitate connectivity for trade and commerce this train may be extended up to Keonjhar.

Amongst others, request was made for introduction of a Shatabdi Express from Puri to Paradeep. I would request Hon'ble Railway Minister through you to expedite and implement these passenger amenities.

Also the Garib Rath introduced between Bhubaneswar and Ranchi may be extended to Puri Jagannath Dham for the convenience of the tourists.

Introduction of EMU Services

Sir, the electrification work between Kharagpur - Bhubaneswar is in progress and stretch of 200 kms between Palasa to Bhubaneswar has been commissioned. Ministry of Railways is requested to introduce fast Moving EMU Trains from Puri-Palasa and Puri-Balasore to cater to the need of passengers of Puri-Khurda Road-Bhubaneswar and Balasore. I would request to Hon'ble Railway Minister through you for introduction of these EMU Trains for the benefit of the passengers.

The Ministry of Railway has introduced an Express Train from Sambalpur to Raipur this may be extended to Puri as this will facilitate a direct link between the capitals of two States. I would also request you that existing Hirakund Express from Nizamuddin to Bhubaneswar which, has been extended up to Visakhapatnam considering its long distance provision of pantry car may be made, introduction of Three tier AC and the frequency of the said Train should be increased from 3 days in a week to daily service. The Hirakund Express may be provided with more coaches in order to cater to the requirement of passengers from Palasa, Berhampur, Chhatrapur and Balugaon.

Visakhapatnam-Nizamuddin Express Train may be increased from three days to daily in a week to cater the need of passengers travelling from Western Orissa to the capital of India. The frequency of New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express may be increased from 4 days to 7 days in week and these three days the Rajdhani Express may run via Sambalpur, Rourkela and Ranchi. The frequency of Puri-Ahmedabad Express via-Sambalpur and Vizianagaram may be increased to facilitate journey of large number of workers from Orissa employed in Gujarat. It is requested that the frequency of this train via-Sambalpur may be increased to thrice a week and via-Vizianagarm to four days in a week. The frequency of Bhubaneswar-Kurla Express may be increased to three days in week. This train is immensely popular by passengers travelling from Western Orissa. Frequency of Puri-Tirupati Express may be increased to daily service and the time span may be reduced from 28 hrs to 24 hrs in the interest of general public. Since large number of fishermen folk are visiting Puri and have business connections, the Puri-Tirupati Express may be having an additional stoppage at 'Tuni' Railway Station under South Central Railway. Coramondal Express may be stopped at "Guddur station" for the convenience of general public.

Establishment of passenger halt at Indradyumna, Puri

Request was made to Railway Ministry that a passenger halt at Indradyumna near Puri under Khurda Road Division may be established. The Railways had conducted a survey and asked for certain information. Necessary information has been provided to the Railways since long and the proposal is a financially viable one.

[Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy]

however, no progress has been made so far in this regard. The necessary of sanction for establishment of a passenger halt at Indradyumna may be accorded in the budget 2008-09.

Passenger Amenities

Sir, Ministry of Railways was requested for increase in passenger amenities for Orissa as with the creation of East Coast Railway and with establishment of its Headquarters in Bhubaneswar the expectation and aspiration of people of Orissa for better infrastructure developments of the stations has been increased. The Ministry of Railways was requested to improve passenger amenities at Puri, Titlagarh, Rayagarha, Raigarha, Koraput, Kessinga, Chattrapur, Balugaon, Jaleswar and Bolangir Stations. The Ministry is also requested to further increase computerized network for reservation at Kuhudi, Kalupadaghat and Chhatrapur of Orissa. Though PRS-cum-UTS has been sanctioned for Sakhigopal, Khariar Road and Soro stations, this has not been made operational. This may kindly be expedited. Janakideipur Railway Station under Khurda Division may be developed as a full-fledged Railway Station to cater for a large chunk of people. The 214 down and 213 up Puri-Cuttack passenger train, the only train which is helping the service holders and daily commuter may be provided with additional coaches as the number of commuters have increased causing immense difficulty to the daily passengers.

Introduction of Pantry Car

Some long distance trains originating from Bhubaneswar-Puri are not provided with Pantry Services. Ministry of Railways is requested that pantry car services for Bhubaneswar-Bangalore Express (8415/8416). Bhubaneswar-Kurla Express (1045/1046) and Puri-Tirupati Express (8439/8440) may be provided. Necessary provision for funds in this regard may be made in the Budget 2008-09.

Coaching Terminals

Sir, Orissa has only one coaching terminal at Bhubaneswar, which is land locked and inhibits expansion. This terminal should be expanded in order to accommodate more number of Trains. The Coaching Terminal at Puri has been closed. Hon'ble Chairman Sir, I would request to Hon'ble Railway Minister through you for setting up of coaching terminals with revival of one at Puri and in order to accommodate more number of trains. Proper coaching terminals may be developed at Berhampur, Sambalpur and Koraput also.

Sir, I would request the Hon'ble Railway Minister through you to kindly substantially increase from the present allotment in the Railway Budget 2008-09 for completion of ongoing railway projects in the State of Orissa which will fulfil the expectation and aspiration of the people of Orissa and culminate in economic growth and prosperity of the State.

SHRI ALAKESH DAS (Nabadwip): Mr. Chairman, Sir, our party CPI (M) have welcomed the Railway Budget. Obviously it has some positive seps. Good fruits have come in the Railway Budget, but it is to be seen whether people get these fruits. The success lies in the full implementation of the Railway Budget. We are apprehensive about it because earlier the hon. Minister gave an assurance that the Calcutta Metro would be extended up to Dakshineshwar which is an international pilgrim centre. The survey has been completed, estimation has been done, but there is no word about Calcutta Metro extension and allocation of funds in this Railway Budget. That is why we are apprehensive. Therefore, the hon. Minister should follow up on his assurances.

Sir, we are happy that the Railway Budget has shown a path of reduction in railway fares for all classes of passengers. But one rupee reduction of fares up to Rs. 50 in non-suburban second class is not so effective. The reduction of fare should be more than one rupee in this case.

The licensed porters are very happy about the announcement made in the Railway Budget about their promotion. But the Minister should follow up with early implementation of this announcement. Otherwise, it will remain an announcement because there are still 1.50 lakh vacancies in the Indian Railways. Then, there are contractual workers who are working hard for the prosperity of the Indian Railways. You cannot ignore their services for the prosperity of the Indian Railways. Why should they not be absorbed in the permanent nature of jobs?

The hon. Railway Minister has made a magic by bringing down the operational ratio to 76.3 per cent and the Railways are committing a profit of Rs. 23.70 in its earning of Rs. 100. So, the Railways is in a good economic position. But I would like to know whether it

has been translated into the people's service in the Railway Budget.

The proposal of 350 kms of new railway lines, 2,150 kms. of gauge conversion, and 1000 kms. of doubling will not meet up the expectations of *aam Admi*. There is no planning and target of electrification of railway lines. I would like to say that lack of planning can also be seen in a project in my constituency, that is, Nabadweep (SC) in West Bengal where one gauge conversion from Shantipur to Krishnagar and Krishnagar to Nabadweep - Nabadweep is well known as the birth place of Shri Chaitnya and is also a well known international pilgrim centre — one doubling from Kalinarayanpur to Krishnagar and other of establishing a new line from Krishnagar to Charatala have been tied up in a single project.

I, along with Chairman of Railway Standing Committee, repeatedly wrote letters to hon. Railway Minister to make them separate and to allocate them separately. But this year also it is in vain. This year, hon. Railway Minister went to Krishnagar and laid the foundation stone of a new line, it is a part of Krishnagar to Korimpur, that is Charatala, but he failed to keep his words in the Budget. He actually went to Krishnagar just three months back and in three months he forgot that he laid the foundation stone there.

Safety, security and punctuality are the three foremost words in the Railway service. But on the day the Railway Budget was presented to the House, seven major trains ran late from 30 minutes to 24 hours. There is no safety word for trains in the Railway Budget. Recently, the trains have become the targets of terrorists. No precautionary measures have been taken by the Railways.

There is also a dangerous move to privatise some sectors of Indian Railways in the name of Public-Private Partnership. Container services, wagon leasing policy, and new wagon investment schemes, improvement of four stations by private entrepreneurs, etc. cannot be welcomed.

I want to mention that Sealdah and Howrah stations should be made world class stations by the Indian Railways on its own initiative. The Railways should not give diesel engine locomotives, coach factories in the hands of private entrepreneurs. The Railways are not taking the responsibility of Burn Standard and Braithwaite in West Bengal.

In the Budget, West Bengal is deprived of so many things. Ten new *Garib Raths* have been introduced but none from West Bengal. Why? I would like to know are there no *garibs* in West Bengal. Out of 53 new trains introduced, West Bengal got only three new trains. I wrote a letter and requested for a train for thousands of visitors to Hazarduary. A train from Sealdah to Murshidabad for this purpose have been introduced, but that is once a week. I would like to request the hon. Railway Minister that that train should be made daily. I would also like to mention here that out of ten trains, whose frequencies are increased, only one is from West Bengal. Sir, we have not got any new schemes in the last four years. All the implemented projects are of previous hon. Railway Minister's projects.

They are talking of development of backward areas, but where is the Jhargram-Purulia rail line, where goes the Majherhat terminal. It is well known to all that industrialisation process is going on in West Bengal and for this railway infrastructure development is required. But the hon. Railway Minister has not mentioned anything about the infrastructure development. The Railway Minister has not paid any attention to it.

We asked for a superfast train from Sealdah to New Jalpaiguri because North-Eastern gateway is now Siliguri. So, for Jogithapa to Mynaguri about 630 kms. of railway track is required and only 60 kms. of railway track has been assured. We talked about Bharat-Bhutan new railway track, but that is also not there in the Railway Budget. There is no mention of Balurghat hilly railway in the Budget. We talked about Bankura-Ranibandh Railway line, but there is no sign of it in the Railway Budget. I would like to mention here that as far as the model station Ranaghat is concerned, that is not implemented fully. I want to mention that Kalyani station in the Eastern Railway Section should be made a model station. As far as EMU coach is concerned, it was told that in the earlier Budget from Bongaon to Ranaghat, from Kolkata to Bongaon and from Kolkata to Kalyani, all the trains will be of 12 coaches, but there is very little sign of 12 coaches train in this Budget.

Signalling system is very poor; trains are running very late. So the Railway Minister should talk about this. I would also like to say to the Railway Minister that the responsibility of the Railway over-bridges should be of the Railways; it should not be on the State Governments. There is a Bandel-Katwa electrification programme but it is not going very well. The Bandel-Katwa line electrification

[Dr. Alakesh Das]

should be completed. I would again like to say that the gauge conversion from Shantipur to Nabadwip should be made. That is in my constituency.

I have got many more points regarding the Railway schemes; I would like to lay my speech on the Table.

*Sir, MPs from West Bengal was demanding to give license to Hawkers. People who comes from East Bengal in the time of partition by getting no jobs became hawkers and settled in the railway stations for sellings the products which were the need of the passengers. But in this railway budget, Railway Minister have told nothing about licensing of hawkers.

Railway should run shuttle train from Ranaghat to Krishnagar, Ranaghat to Samtipur in the Eastern Railway Section.

As a member of consultative committee, I repeatedly asked about 2 new stations- 1. Gungia between (Chakdah and Payradanga) 2. Coopers (Ranaghat and Gangnapur). Hon'ble Railway Minister agreed and asked the railway officers to make implementation of that. But Railway is taking 2 years time to establish to stations. Railway should quick implement these stations.

I also demanded to introduce a computerized reservation centre in Bagula Station. I think railway authority would materialize it.

People are hardly in need of ROB in Ranaghar Ratshtala, Chakdaha, Railway should take total responsibility of it.

In my constituency Railway should run chakdaha local. I am also giving proposal of new line from Kalyani to Haringhata. Because one is industrial growth town and another is from agricultural point of view very enriched town. I sincerely hope that these demands will be met up.

I am also expressing my demand for the immediate implementation of running the train from Kolkata to Bangladesh. I also request Hon'ble Railway Minister to make a stoppage of train in Ranaghat junction.

Santipur is a world known textile centre. I request railway authority to make a exhibition centre as well as a selling centre of textile materials in the Santipur Station.*

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Translation]

SHRI NAVIN JINDAL (Kurukshetra): Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Rail Budget this year also like last year. I strongly support the Rail Budget and I congratulate the hon. Minister as he has presented a historic budget under the guidance of the hon. Prime Minister and Chairman of UPA hon. Sonia Gandhiji. Passenger fares have been reduced in this budget.

Before UPA came to power, the railways was reeling under financial crisis and it was not in a position to give full dividend on its paid up capital to the Government of India. It is a matter of happiness that operative ratio which was 98 percent earlier has come down to 76 per cent during last four years and the profit of railways has also surged. During past four year our railways have earned a profit of approximately Rs. 68 thousand crore. Railway dealing with the passengers has also improved a lot. I would like to congratulate all the employees and officers of railways for its success and progress made by it and I hope that in future also they would also keep working with same zeal and efficiency.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, so far as passenger amenities are concerned, I would say that there has been a lot of improvement in this regard. But if we compare these with eastern countries such as China, we find that their stations are far superior to even our airports. Still, I am fully confident that soon we would make further progress in this regard. Train run on time in European countries and we need to make more efforts to ensure that all our trains run on time.

It is a welcome step that the toilets in our trains would be made discharge free, *i.e.* green toilets. I think it is much needed. This task should be completed before Eleventh Plan because the human waste should not be discharged in open. Second thing I would like to appreciate is construction of high level platforms and at some of the stations it would be from low level to medium level. My submission is that if all the platforms are made high level at one go it would benefit the people move.

Safety of passengers is trains should be accorded top most priority. In this regard, the hon. Minister has informed the House that 6000 vacant posts of constables and 1000 post of Sub-Inspector in RPF will be filled up

by May. Five percent post of constables and 10 percent post of Sub-Inspectors have been reserved for women candidates. My submission is that in place of five percent at least 25 percent seats should be reserved for women.

Sir, most of the time is wasted on level crossings. At crossing people have to wait for half-an-hour and sometimes even upto one hour whereas, in other countries gates are automatically closed half-a-minute or one minute before arrival of the train and gates get opened when the train has passed. I urge the hon. Minister to man all unmanned crossings or install automatic system so that wastage of time can be avoided. When gates remain closed for long people take unsafe method to cross the rail line.

The construction of over 500 rail bridges and rail under bridges is under progress with 50:50 contribution of State Governments In this regard, I would like to draw attention of the hon. Minister to an ROB in my constituency Kurukshetra. The work on ROB level crossing number-32 B, which is near Kaithal Grain Market has been stopped for quite some time. I would urge the hon. Minister to resume the said work at the earliest.

Secondly, I would like the work on ROB level crossing number-98B2 on Radore–Yamunanagar Road to be started expeditiously. Third, the work on ROB level crossing number-98AC on Shahbad-Thol Road should also be started early.

Sir, in 2005, I had requested for Yamunanagar-Patiala Railway line. Its engineering-cum-traffic survey was completed in December, 2005. I have been informed that the said line would be unprofitable with negative returns. I again urge the hon. Minister that by the time the line gets completed the route would turn profitable. It is the demand of the people of entire Haryana including my constituency, Kurukshetra. It should be reconsidered as to how the work can be taken up. If there is a delay in it, then at least Jagadhari-Kurukshetra line should be laid alternatively. It would immensely benefit the people.

The hon. Members are aware that there is ample scope of industrialization in Jharkhand and Orissa and new units are being set up there. If the existing network in the State is expanded and more new lines are laid it can immensely benefit the railways. Some of my colleagues from Orissa and Jharkhand have also made the same demand, but I would like to add into their demand that the laying of Dayatari Sukhinda-Talcher line, assigned to Rail Development Corporation Ltd., should be completed at the earliest. The said corporation was allocated Rs. 600 crore for laying Haridaspur-Paradeep line, but the corporation has spent only Rs. 90 crore. Its deadline is 30th June, 2008. I would urge that the work should be completed expeditiously.

Adding two-three points about my constituency Kurukshetra I would like to conclude my speech. Kurukshetra-Narwana line passes through densely populated parts of Kurukshetra. People living on either side of the tracks face lot of problem. Two-three railway crossing on this stretch are closed for hours. My submission is that if a by-pass is constructed in place of the existing one, it would provide respite to the lakhs of devotees who come here at the time of solar-eclipse. Shifting of existing rail line would render the land vacant which can be used for commercial purposes and the expenditure incurred on laying new line will be off-set, rather, commercial use will generate more money than the expenditure incurred.

Last year, the hon. Minister had said that Kurukshetra will be made a modern station is place of a model station. But nothing has been done in this regard so far. Sir, through you, I would like to urge the hon. Minister that Kurukshetra should be made a modern station soon. The people of Kaithal have been demanding for long for a direct train to Delhi. Now, they have to come via Kurukshetra. Many a time, when they reach Kurukshetra, they find that Delhi bound train has already steamed off. My submission is that till a direct train is provided from Kaithal, Kurukshetra-Delhi train should wait till arrival of the train from Kaithal.

My last point is concerning Narwana-Kurukshetra line. A proposal for its electrification was approved in 2006-07 with an estimated cost of Rs. 18 crores but the work on the said line has not been started so far. Through you, I would like to request that the work on this line should be taken up urgently. I feel that the sanitary conditions at most of the stations in the country are horrible. The Government should take steps to ensure cleanliness at the stations.

In the end, I would like to thank the Chairman of UPA Shrimati Sonia Gandhiji, hon. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh ji and hon. Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasadji for presenting a historical budget.

[English]

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY (Chidambaram): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Railway Budget for the year 2008-09.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate our hon. Railway Minister Shri Laluji, who is ably assisted by not only his Ministers of State but also the entire team of 14 lakh employees of the Ministry of Railways, which is the oldest and the biggest asset of India.

Shri Laluji has proved not by his appearance, although he is appearing to be a very light-hearted man, but he has proved his mettle in presenting a brilliant Budget. The Press calls it a jewel in the UPA crown. Some people call it as a populist Railway Budget and others call it as an election-oriented Railway Budget. But whatever may be the adage or attribute, the Railways have proved that they can do wonderful work given the opportunity, taking the people's interest in heart.

Sir, not only he has created the infrastructure but he has also proved that he can save money to the tune of Rs. 25,000 crore. More so, he has improved the system in creating the infrastructure and also the functioning of the Railways.

The people of Tamil Nadu, particularly, will be very grateful to Shri Laluji for giving a free hand to the Minister of State Shri Veluji. It was after 46 years that Tamil Nadu had been given any Railway Minister at the Centre, when Shri A.K. Murthy was made the MoS. He had changed the face of the railway stations in Tamil Nadu overnight, because he was also given a free hand. The people of Tamil Nadu suffered for nearly five decades without any facilities or infrastructure there. He was given an opportunity as an MoS in the year 2002, and he had proved that he could do something useful. Now, in this term, Shri Velu has been given the opportunity. We all know in this august House in regard to giving an opportunity to an MoS, that not many Cabinet Ministers give a share to their MoS in participating in the decision-making process. But Shri Velu was given an opportunity to prove his mettle as an administrator, which he had taken it very seriously, and he has proved that he can do wonders.

Sir, in Tamil Nadu, for the last 50 years, the people had suffered without any infrastructural facilities. But now, at the instance of our beloved leader, Dr. Ramadassa Ayya, Shri Veluji took it very seriously by taking steps, paying more attention to the whole of India, particularly, to the State of Tamil Nadu and other Southern States, which are lacking infrastructural facilities.

Sir, as a whole I would like to appreciate the Railways and the Railway Budget. But I would also like to suggest a few points for their kind attention.

17.00 hrs.

Firstly, the inordinate delay in running of the trains is there. Even as a Member of Parliament, who travels most of his time to the constituency by train, I find it very difficult to travel on time. There is delay of hours together. I brought this to the kind attention of not only Shri Laluji but also to the attention of Shri Veluji and they are not able to do anything till date. I would like to request them to do something to correct this.

Secondly, as they say prevention is better than cure. But the cases of accidents, in spite of generation of good income and more opportunities to fulfil the needs of the poor people, are increasing. The number of accidents that are taking place is unprecedented. More deaths are taking place and they are increasing day by day. We should do something seriously. I would request our hon. Minister of Railways Shri Laluji to pay special attention and to see that the safety measures are in place and do more work in saving the precious lives of the people.

My third point is on sanitation and healthcare. If you travel throughout India, most of the places where I travel, especially in the Northern India and North-Eastern Region, the stations are very dirty. Wherever you go, the railway stations are totally like dustbins. I do not know the reason. Some 14 lakh people are working in the Railways. This is the greatest asset of India. If the stations are not properly cleaned and maintained, we cannot boast of any improvement or development of our nation. Sir, I would like to request our hon. Minister of Railways Shri Laluji who is more interested in feeling the poor people's pangs and pains, and who can do wonderful things in changing the situation, as he has changed the overall situation of the Railways, to look into the same.

Sir, finally I have a few points. I will not take more time of the House. The Railways can provide the facilities to the passengers to carry their own luggage like the facility provided in the airports. It is a best method, not

to depend on anybody and without creating a chaotic situation in the railway stations the passengers can attend to their own needs. This facility can be provided.

The other one is that bus facility from railway stations to important places connecting cities or the villages is to be provided. In cities like not only Chennai but all cosmopolitan cities and all the metropolitan cities, people find it very difficult to take the mode of conveyance available and it is not possible for them to reach home in time. So, the Railways can provide, in coordination with the respective State Governments, the bus transport facility to the people from the railway stations to all the points.

Sir, I have one more point to make on the first-aid and treatment. The first-aid are urgent and immediate treatment is to be provided to the people affected in any accident etc. By providing this facility, such affected people can be attended to immediately. This organization is not only a famous one but a largest one and steps can be taken to attend to the needs of the people, particularly those who are poor and in need.

Finally, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister Shri Laluji and his efficient team of Ministers of State supported by the whole staff. They can still take very effective steps to better the situation for the development of the nation.

[Translation]

*SHRI BHAILAL (Robertsganj): I would like to draw attention of the hon. Minister of Railways towards certain major problems with regard to railways concerning my parliamentary constituency.

Robertsganj, Sonebhadra and Mirzapur is an industrial area. There are thermal power plants, hydel power plants and coal mines at several places in this area. Hindalco's aluminium plant and many cement factories are also located in this area. There are a large number of engineers, employees and officers in this area but the area is deprived of railway facilities. It has rail network for namesake. My submission is that if Prayagraj Express is extended beyond Allahabad upto Shaktinagar, Anpara, Renukut, Robertsganj, Chunar and Mirzapur the people of Sonebhadra district will get rail connectivity to Delhi and Lucknow. At the same time the railways will also earn revenue from it.

I, therefore, urge the hon. Minister to provide good rail connectivity to New Delhi and Lucknow for the people of Shaktinagar, Robertsganj, Sonebhadra under my parliamentary constituency.

SHRI CHANDRA PAL SINGH YADAV (Jhansi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on Rail Budget. The hon. Minister has presented a budget containing complex numerical jugglery just to gain popularity. The budget has been prepared just to show profit figuratively. It has been twisted in a way just to reflect the profit. Crores of countryman daily travel by our trains but we are well aware of true picture of our railways.

Passenger amenities are on decline day by day. The trains are in such a condition that we find rats, bugs, mosquitoes etc. in each train. Sometimes, it becomes difficult to travel. The bedroll supplied in train is often so dirty that we can't even use it.

So far catering is concerned, what to speak of normal trains, the standard of catering is declining even in Shatabdi and Rajdhani Express day by day. While travelling in Bhopal Shatabdi, I observed that same menu is repeated for 365 days. I would like to say that in place of presenting the budget containing numerical jugglery, it would have been better if attention was paid to new projects and creation of passenger amenities. No doubt, the number of trains have increased greatly, but whether our present network has the capacity to accommodate them. It would have been better if attention was paid to augment the capacity. If the issues like sanitation at our stations, which are not clean, had been addressed in the budget, the budget would have been far better.

In the present era of competition, the tourist from across the world are coming to India. If we provide them such trains for journey, I do not think they would like to travel by them. Today there is a need for providing trains with world-class passenger amenities. The train accidents and looting of passengers has become a common affair, so there is a need to give serious attention to it so as to check it. Most of the rail bridges have outlived their age. Any day an accident may occur because of these old bridges. Therefore, it would have been better if this aspect has also been taken into account while preparing

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Chandra Pal Singh Yadav]

the budget. Today, on this occasion, through you I would like to say that the constitutional experts separated Rail Budget from General Budget, because India is a very big country. People face difficulty in travelling to and fro. One part of the country has hilly terrain, whereas, on the other side there are rivers and in these conditions train is the most suitable means of transportation. Though, India is a predominantly an agricultural country, yet there is no separate budget for agriculture, whereas, Rail Budget is presented separately. For the last some years, the different Railway Ministers introduced more new trains for their home State and that is why, more trains have been given to Bihar. Though Uttar Pradesh is the largest State, yet I am sorry to say that it has been grossly neglected. No project have been announced for it. I hail from Bundelkhand which is a quite backward area and it has been neglected even after the independence. No one has cared for it. I was hoping for change since Laluji has a rural background and has a caring attitude for the backward areas, but he too, did not pay any attention to it.

Bundelkhand played an important role in country's struggle for freedom. Not only the Indians but foreigners also remember the name of great warrior Maharani Laxmibai. I feel such a State has been neglected constantly.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to draw attention of the hon. Minister to the problem concerning my constituency. The survey for doubling of Jhansi-Kanpur line has been completed but work has not been started thereon so far. Trains arriving from south and headed to Bihar, Lucknow or Poorvanchal ply on this route. In absence of doubling of the said rail line these trains run late by hours and always reach their destination late. Therefore, my submission is that the said route should be doubled at the earliest.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, laying of Lalitpur-Singrauli rail line was announced some years back. The work on it has been in progress for the past 10 years but it has not been completed. My submission is that the pace of work be accelerated. One-thrid part of this line falls in U.P. and two third in M.P. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not go in details, be brief.

SHRI CHANDRA PAL SINGH YADAV: Sir, the work has been going on at snail's pace. If said work is not completed in time, the people will have to face problems.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, a coach maintenance factory was proposed to be set up in Jhansi at the time of constitution of North Central Railway Zone. I had raised the question in this connection in the last session too. A positive reply was also given by the hon. Minister but there is no mention of that in this year's railway budget. Hon. Minister may please give a reply as it will be beneficial to the people of that area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please, conclude now, you have already taken ten minutes.

SHRI CHANDRA PAL SINGH YADAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will conclude in just two minutes. Jhansi is a historic city where tourists come from far away places but they have to face a lot of problems due to lack of facilities. Intercity Express plies between Jaipur and Gwalior. The tourists going to Khajuraho will be facilitated if this train is extended upto Jhansi. Jhansi-Kanpur Intercity Express should be extended upto Lucknow. Bhopal-Lucknow Express, which runs thrice a week should be run daily. Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Railway Minister has provided stoppages at Mathura and Morena for the Bhopal-New Delhi Shatabdi Express but I would urge him to provide its stoppage at Lalitpur which is district headquarters. Sachkhand Express should also be provided a stoppage at Lalitpur. Jhansi has no flyover though three railway lines pass through there. I request that a flyover should be constructed at Sikri Bazar and Lalitpur Road. *...(Interruptions)**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now your speech will not go on record. Shri Tapir Gao.

SHRI TAPIR GAO (Arunachal Pradesh): Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, heaps of praise are showered on Laluji during the discussion in the House on the Railway budget every year. But, perhaps, I am the only Member in the House who feel dizzy after hearing about the tremendous progress made by the Railways and seeing a lot of shortcomings in the Railways.

Sir, connecting every part of the country with railway line should not be decided on the basis of economic viability. It is important for the national unity and national security. I want permission of the House to speak in clear terms that this House should allow the Arunachal Pradesh Government to have railway connectivity with China also if the state is to be linked with railway line. Even after 60 years of independence, Arunachal Pradesh has not been connected with railway line till date. I have

*Not recorded.

been raising this issue in the House for the last four years but I do not understand why it is not reaching Laluji's and Naran Bhai Rathwaji's ears.

Today, I am hearing about the success of the Railways but it is a grave mistake and against the interest of the country not to link the northeastern States and particularly Arunachal Pradesh, with the railway. China is laying claims over Arunachal Pradesh today. Our PM Dr. Manmohan Singh has not uttered even a single word that Arunachal Pradesh is a part of India. Pranab Dada has said it. It is necessary to link Arunachal Pradesh with railway in order to retain it as a part of the country. Linking Arunachal with railway means to join it with India and with the national unity and security. Every year he prepares railway budget but not a single rupee is being allocated for Arunachal Pradesh. I had given a proposal to Laluji last year that if Arunachal Pradesh is not to be linked with the railway then some portion of the railway budget should be provided to those States which do not have railways and this money should be used to build roads, bridges, hospitals, schools etc. there. Otherwise, a Member from Lakshadweep, Andaman-Nicobar, Sikkim, Mizoram and Arunchal Pradesh should be appointed as Railway Minister. If Laluji confines himself only to Bihar, then an MP from these States should be made Railway Minister so that these States can also be linked with the railways. ...*(Interruptions)*

I would like to tell clearly that I can show the way to the hon. Minister if he feels uncomfortable in linking Arunachal Pradesh with the railways. Linking of Murkong Selek with Posighat was included in survey and investigation last time but there is no mention about it in this budget. Same is the case with Rupai to Parshuram Kund. If this is the situation, then how are you going to face China? China defeated our troops in the 1962 war due to lack of railway connectivity. Hon. Minister should note my point if Arunachal Pradesh is to be linked with the railways. Bogibeel bridge to Murkong Selek and Posighat should be connected with broad gauge because you do not even have the map to connect Rangia to Murkong Selek with broad gauge and because of which the desired progress is not being made there. You should have included railway line from Rupai to Parshuram Kund in this budget but you have not. Provision should have been made for this too in the budget.

There is a popular Tiger Project Wildlife Sanctuary Namdapha in Miao which also has coal and oilfields. You should extend the Margarita to Miao line by 15 kms. which will facilitate the tourists to Namdapha Wildelife Sanctuary. Margarita should be connected with the Nampong railway line. The Stil well road there, being constructed by the Transport Minister, can be connected with the South East Asia under the look East Policy. You should, therefore, connect Margarita to Nampong, a distance of 25-30 kms. with the railways which can be connected with the South East Asia and China in future. I congratulate hon. Prime Minister for inaugurating 20,000 MW multipurpose hydropower project, Dibang. But, there is no bridge on the river Lohit for this project. So, how will all the equipment for generating 20,000 MW hydropower be carried over there? I, therefore, demand to link Daula to Roing with a railway line. How will you generate 20,000 MW power when there is no bridge? Railway Ministry and Power Ministry should be concerned about it. There should be a broad gauge line from Rangia to Murkong Selek. Hon. Railway Minister himself knows how much progress has been made there, therefore, this work should also be expedited.

Sir, providing railway connectivity to Arunachal Pradesh in the North East is a matter concerning national security. Arunachal is the only State, which has the potential of generating 75 thousand MW power. But in absence of rail connectivity how the machinery and other items can be moved there. Therefore, in view of national security and also its huge potential for power generation the Government of India should connect the State with railway. When China can lay a railway line at an altitude of 1700 metre why can't a great nation like ours connect Arunachal with railways? Lalu has called our rail network an Indrajaal, so why it's boundaries should be conferred to Bihar, let it be extended upto Arunachal Pradesh.

Sir, concession in fare has been granted to students, senior citizens and women. But it is like a fairytale for the people of a State devoid of rail network. Earlier also I have demanded that budgetary allocation should be made for such States also so that the work can be taken up there. UPA Government is propunder or Look East Policy. India should have connectivity with South East Asian countries. The Government has provided air connectivity but nothing has been done to provide rail connectivity. Therefore, my submission is that if the Government wants to work on South East Asia policy and Look East policy, then the Government should carryout work in northeastern States, through which we can even have rail connectivity with Burma and Thailand ...*(Interruptions)*

[Shri Tapir Gao]

Sir, I will make a last point and conclude. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Alright, you conclude.

SHRI TAPIR GAO: Alright, I am concluding. The M.Ps. from northeast demand expeditious completion of Bogibeel bridge. The Railway Ministry invited tenders thrice for construction of pillars of said bridge and every time tenders were cancelled. Who is behind cancellation of the said tenders, what are its reasons, which lobby was behind it? It is against the interests of north eastern States. The hon. Minister will have to explain why it all happened? My submission is that the pillars for Bogibeel Bridge should be constructed at the earliest.

Sir, I am concluding. If I were Hanuman I would have opened my chest and shown what the people of northeastern States think about the hon. Minister of Railways. No development has taken place there. I am the only person who has opposed the rail budget totally. I am thankful to you for having given me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

*SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI (Gulbarga): I would like to thank the Chair for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Railway Budget, 2008-09.

I whole-heartedly welcome the Railway Budget, 2008-09 presented by the Hon'ble Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad. Sir, it is a matter of great pleasure and satisfaction that the Railway Budget covers all sections of the society. It is a historic situation when the Hon'ble Railway Minister has presented a profit-making Budget for the last five years without any increase in the passenger fares/freight charges otherwise it has always been a deficit Budget. It is for the first time that you have reduced passengers' fares in almost all the classes.

Secondly, you have introduced several new Railway trains including the Garib Rath which is very useful for the common man who cannot afford luxurious trains. It is also a matter of satisfaction that you have been considerate towards the women senior citizens by reducing the fare by 50%. It is a great gesture towards them. You have also provided concession for the students. It is for the first time that the Railway Minister has been considerate towards coolies also by providing them the job of Gangman in a particular category. Hence, I support the Railway Budget, 2008-09.

I would briefly draw the kind attention of the Hon'ble Railway Minister on the following issues concerning my constituency, *i.e.,* Gulbarga, which need your urgent attention: -

(i) Some time ago, around 20 MPs from Karnataka represented to the Minister for setting up of an Office of DRM at Gulbarga which is Divisional Headquarters of Railways. We have been demanding this off and on as Gulbarga receives more trains than any other nearby Railway Station but somehow it could not be accommodated. I, therefore, demand immediate decision in this regard.

(ii) The on-going Railway project between Gulbarga and Bidar had not been allotted adequate funds thus the project is getting unduly delayed. It is one of the important Railway lines between Gulbarga and Delhi via Hyderabad-Karnataka area. If the completion is expedited, it would reduce travelling time almost by five hours and promote trade and industry in the area. I suggest for grant of additional funds for this project.

(iii) There is a long pending demand of this region for introducing a new Shatabdi train between Sholapur and Bangalore via Gulbarga. If this train is introduced, it would cover about three-fourth area of Karnataka.

(iv) Railway line between Sholapur to Raichur has been doubled but some area has not been covered yet which is causing delay in the scheduled timings of the train. I, therefore, request that these left over pockets may also be doubled for the convenience of the running of the trains and the public of the area.

(v) Hyderabad is the nearest Metro city from Gulbarga where the trade and industrial community has business interests for which they have to travel on regularly between Gulbarga and Hyderabad. At present, there is one passenger train running between Wadi Junction and Hyderabad. I would suggest that this train should be extended upto Gulbarga which could be converted into inter-city train between Gulbarga and Hyderabad for the convenience of the passengers of the area and commercial interest of the business community by and large.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

(vi) Recently, one Garib Rath train has been introduced by you between Hyderabad and Bangalore which is passing through my constituency of Gulbarga but no stop over has been provided at any of the Railway Stations, *i.e.,* Chittapur, Sedam and Yadgir thus leaving this already neglected and under-developed region uncovered. I, therefore, appeal to the Railway Minister that this train may be provided a stoppage at Sedam or Yadgiir at least.

(vii) At present, two Rajdhani Trains operating between Delhi and Bangalore which pass through Andhra area. I request that one of the Rajdhani Trains should operate via Manmad, Dhodani, Gulbarga, Raichur and Bangalore. It would thus cover some more areas of the Karnataka State. Sir, Gulbarga is a historical and religious place for the pilgrims of both the communities, *i.e.,* Hindus and Muslims. It has a Dargah of Hazrat Banda Nawaz, Sharan Bhasheshwar and Dattatriya Temples where lakhs of pilgrims visit throughout the year. Since, Gulbarga Railway Station lacks basic communities, they have to face a lot of bitter experiences. It is, therefore, utmost essential and urgent to upgrade this station in the larger interest of the local public as well as the pilgrims at large who come here from all corners of the country.

With these words, I once again extend my heartiest greetings to the hon'ble Minister for his pro-poor Budget and expect him that he would pay a humane approach on my above-mentioned genuine and urgent demands.

[Translation]

*SHRI BHUPENDRASINH SOLANKI (Godhara): Sir, I rise to oppose the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways. I feel the future development of the railways has been put at stake in order to gain popularity. I have noticed that the hon. Minister has not done anything special for the development of infrastructure in the railways during the previous four budgets and the present one. the work of panel-interlocking, signalling and track renewal has come to a standstill. Announcements were made regarding dedicated freight corridor and Loco wagon workshop, but these projects could not take off. Meanwhile, existing infrastructure has been exploited fully. The rolling stock procured and tracks constructed under Special Railway Safety Fund with a corpus of Rs. 17 thousand crore created during the tenure of the previous Minister have been utilized beyond capacity. Huge amount lies unutilized under the head of passenger amenities but it is neither being utilized properly nor has corruption been checked. In the previous budgets he announced a cut in passenger fares, whereas, the foot remains that he increased it upto 50 per cent during this period. He added 8 percent safety surcharge in fares, doubled cancellation charges, withdrew the facility of onward journey and increased fares in another 200 trains in the name of superfast charges. There are several other examples of this kind. He increased the period of advance reservation and added the likely revenue of first quarter of the next fiscal in this year's budget so as to reflect more profit. He has fully exploited the available resources and when nothing was left, railway property was put up for sale in the name of public private partnership. Office site near Delhi Railway station has been sold for Rs. 5000 crore. Nearly 125 plots of railway land are up for sale in many cities including Delhi. It is as good as selling ancestral property. Container service has already been opened for private sector. Licence fee has been charged in lieu thereof, no matter if it has adversely affected CONCOR.

The bitter truth is that the railways which earns thousands of crores of rupees as profit will lose its own property. Some of the newly announced trains, perhaps, may not be able to see the light of the day even during the next decade. Further, passengers travelling in AC coaches throughout the year will have to find out as to in which train fare is less and during which months 2 to 5 per cent rebate can be availed.

Today, the hon. Minister is unable to say which train is popular and which is unpopular. A list is being prepared in this regard. It clearly indicated that the concession available to passengers will only be 3.5% and 2 per cent and not seven percent.

Same is the case with new trains announced by the hon. Minister of Railways. Al least nine out of newly announced 53 trains will not be able to run on tracks in the next 10 years. All these trains will start only after gauge conversion and no one knows how much time gauge conversion will take. It is also not clear whether the concession granted in second-class fares will be available in sleeper class as well.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Bhupendrasinh Solanki]

The hon. Minister of Railways said that private sector will invest Rs. one lakh crore in the next five years. This investment will be utilized for development of stations, creation of multi model logistic parks and in other areas. The railways has envisioned to earn Rs. 4 thousand crore next year through the sale of railway land. The intention is clear. The precious railway land may be sold through Railway Land Development Authority. Apart from it, the entire private investment will be recovered from the public on the lines of toll road. To sum up, the hon. Minister of Railways has presented the popular budget but passed the burden on to the common man. During the next one year, the hon. Minister will bring private investment of Rs. 25 thousand crore which will entirely be recovered from the public later on. It is like daydreaming.

With these words, I demand that the Railway Minister address some problems related to my constituency -

1. Jaipur-Bandra Express, Pune-Indore Express and Ajmer-Pune Express should be provided a stoppage at Godhra. It is a longstanding demand. People staged a demonstration when the General Manager, Western Railway visited Godhra on 22 February, 2008.

2. ROBs should be constructed at two places near Salia between Godhra and Dahod on NH-59.

3. There is a railway line between Godhra and Ahmedabad which has been electrified but no passenger train is plying on it. A passenger train should be introduced there without any further delay.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI JAI PRAKASH (Hissar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Lalu Prasadji has presented a very good budget before the House for the benefit of the common man, the poor and the farmers. I support it. Notwithstanding the good work the UPA government may do, our friends in the opposition have made it a point to criticize it. The opposition should appreciate if a government does some good work in a democratic setup but have everything is being opposed be it reduction in fares, laying of new rail lines and/or construction of corridors. I would therefore, like to request my friends in the opposition that they should not speak like this just to mislead the voters. Our senior colleague Shri Santosh Gangwar Saheb is sitting here. I would urge upon him that this budget must be appreciated. Fares have been reduced for the poor and the common man has been connected with the railways. Therefore, it must be appreciated.

Sir, I would like to cite an example during the tenure of the NDA Government. A railway line from Jind to Sonepat was approved during the NDA's rule. The then MP used to repeatedly say that he has got the railway line approved. But now, when I am the M.P. I could not find anything regarding this rail line. Through you, I want to bring to the notice of the hon. Railway Minister that the CM of Haryana has written a letter to the Railway Ministry and perhaps he is the first CM who has offered to bear half of the expenditure for laying the railway line between Sonepat and Jind. I request hon. Railway Minister that the work on this railway line should be started as soon as possible.

Sir, secondly, Hissar is one of the five mega cities built in the country to reduce the load on the NCR. Our hon. PM had announced a year ago in Panipat that a six lane road would be constructed from Hissar to Delhi. I would also like to inform the hon. Railway Minister that Hissar is a very big industrial town. A huge thermal power plant is also coming up there along with many steel industries. A very small stretch of 50-60 kms. from Hansi to Rohtak remains to be constructed to connect Hissar directly with Delhi. If this is constructed then, Hissar will be directly connected to Delhi and one can go from there upto Bhatinda via Parsa. I, therefore, request that Hansi and Rohtak should be connected via Maham.

Sir, thirdly, Railways has built many ROBs but I regret to say that even after having requested many times by the Haryana Government and myself for construction of two ROBs, nothing has been done so far.

There is lot of traffic on NH-71 in Jind because of a large milk plant there where hundreds of trucks are engaged in transportation of milk and milk products. Railway crossing there remains closed for more than two hours. If the Railway Ministry sanctions an ROB there then the Haryana Government is ready to pay its share immediately. Similarly, an ROB should be built at Narwana on the Jind-Bhatinda railway line on NH-65. There is an unmanned level crossing at Hudakhera village on Hissar-Jakhar railway line. It should be manned as soon as possible as the Haryana Government has already built a road there. I urge that it should be manned soon so as to avoid accidents there.

There is a large sugar mill in Jind. Our farmers have to pass through the city to bring their sugarcane crop to this mill which results in accidents. There is Bulana village on Jind-Bhatinda railway line which is just 5-6 kms. away

from Jind. Through you, I request the hon. Railway Minister to build a manned level crossing there Haryana Government is ready to construct a road there. Once this road is built, thousands of farmers will not have to go around 20 kms. to bring sugarcane from their fields to the sugar mill. I, therefore, urge that a manned level crossing be made at Dulani village in Jind.

Hon. Railway Minister had announced in his last budget speech that he will do it next year. Baroda is a religious village of Jainism on Jind-Bhatinda railway line, where the villagers have themselves constructed a platform. I demand that a halt should be provided there.

Through you, I would like to mention a very important point, rather I would make a complaint to the hon. Minister of Railways. Our Government had contributed funds for construction of an under-pass on Hissar-Jakhar railway line. Rs. 70,000 have been deposited for this purpose and we are ready to pay the rest of the amount. However, the underpass has not been constructed till now. Through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways to construct an underpass at Uchana-Ghaso railway line in village Ghaso. The State Government of Haryana is ready to pay the entire amount of funds for it and half of the funds have already been deposited.

There is no level crossing at village Rajli on Hissar-Jakhar section to move from one side to the other. Farmers have to travel a distance of 25 kms. for transporting their produce from fields to the village. The construction of a manned railway level crossing at crossing number 58/15-59/1 would facilitate the farmers of Rajli village in moving to and fro between village and the fields.

Sir, Hissar-Sadalpur meter gauge line has now been converted into a broad gauge line. Village 'Deva' is situated along this line. Pond, School and hospital are located on one side of this line and the village is on the other. The level of this railway line has been raised by four feet. In the absence of a railway level crossing, neither cattle nor children can move from one side to the other. Therefore, I request him to construct a railway level crossing at village Dhansu on Hissar-Sadalpur section.

In the end, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways to fulfil these petty demands of mine. The entire nation is appreciating the railway budget presented by Shri Laluji under the leadership of UPA chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi and under the guidance of hon. Prime Minister. Both the General Budget and the Railway budget are being praised. He will be appreciated more if he does some more works in my constituency. I support this budget.

[English]

*SHRI SANTASRI CHATTERJEE (Serampore): Sir, with your kind permission, I hereby lay my speech on the Railway Budget 2008-09.

1. West Bengal has been badly deprived in this Budget and some projects are to be included. Suggestions have already been placed before the Hon'ble Railway Minister by the MPs of West Bengal.

2. In order to redress the distress suffered by the commuters Howrah and Sealdah Railway Stations need proper attention by opening new lines, arranging extra bogies in local trains, selecting few stations for improvement of services. Serampore, Sheoraphuli, Dankuni, Bandel and Ganai Road Railway Stations merit special attention.

3. Uttarpara Railway Station situated in the Eastern Railway be redesigned as a replica of Joykrishna Public Library with its founder Babu Joykrishna Mukherjee whose 200 years birth anniversary falls in this year and the Library will step into 150 years of glorious existence.

4. As assured by the Hon'ble Railway Minister, a pilot project for the rehabilitation of lakhs of Railway Hawkers be taken up on an emergency basis. The RPF be directed to stop atrocities on the hawkers.

5. One Shatabdi Express may be introduced from Sealdah to New Jalpaiguri.

6. Punctuality of the Superfast trains *viz.*, Rajdhani, Poorva, Kalka etc. is to be ensured.

*SHRI D.V. SADANAND GOWDA (Mangalore): Sir, the Union Railway Budget 2008-09 presented by Hon'ble Minister for Railways has disappointed the people of Karnataka. Not only 2008-09, even the earlier four budgets presented by the Hon'ble Minister has not given any importance to State of Karnataka. In fact the neighbouring

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri D.V. Sadanand Gowda]

States Tamilnadu, Kerala has taken major shares and name in between these two States was brought in budget entirely made to help only to those States rather than Karnataka. The proposal projects could not be completed due to scarcity of funds and Karnataka in toto has totally neglected for the reasons best known to the Railway Ministry.

Even though the State of Karnataka which is the only State which worked jointly with the Railways by cost sharing basis and providing free lands for the Railway lines. In various projects, the State has a cost share from 50% to 67%. In spite of this approach also, the Railway has totally refused to take up to complete projects. The projects like Munirabad-Mehboobnagar, Gadag-Solapur, Shimoga-Taliguppa, Gulbarga-Bidar etc., the State agreed to have 50% cost share where as the most essential projects of Kottur-Harihar and Bangalore Ramanagar track doubling, the State agree to have 2/3 cost share. Inspite of the Railway refused to give its cooperation for completion of the projects which, this partiality by the Railway Minister with regard to the State of Karnataka is not known to us. Of course the Railway Minister has expressed this venguen with the State when he visited to Bangalore by calling Karnataka people are ugly people but that is the closed chapter. I do not want to discuss at this stage.

In fact, the projects like Hassan-Bangalore, Kadur-Chikmagalure-Sakleshpur new lines Yashwanthpur-Tumkur, Hospet-Hubli track doubling are the needy projects ought to have taken up decades back are still lagging behind by not providing sufficient funds in the last four budgets. The total feeling in Karnataka and the people of Karnataka is that inadequate budgetary allocations are made Karnataka railway projects has deprived the rights of Karnataka people and these projects are not given much importance. Hence I urge and request the Railway Minister to enhance the over all budgetary allocations for the projects stated above and instruct your officers to implement them expeditiously. Already detail requirements and amount needed for the above mentioned projects are placed before the Railway Ministry in detail by the Government of Karnataka and hence I donot take much time in this regard and the same may be perused and taken as part of my budgetary speech.

I would like to make a special mention with regard to the Bangalore-Hassan-Mangalore Railway Line. In fact after much pressure by the public a long gap of 12 years, the gauge conversion work is completed and passenger train started commissioning. But the assurance given by the Railway Minister in the year 2005-06 budget to run three trains are still not implemented. It is left only on papers and promise is only a promise. The Bangalore-Arisikere-Mangalore train timing was announced as early as 2005-06 budget but still no attempts are made by Railway. It is a shameful to the Department and Ministry. The long pending request of "Mangalore Division" is one of the essentialities and once promise was given by the Railway Minister are in cold storage. I wish that immediately orders may be passed and Mangalore Division may be commissioned and the proposed Bangalore-Bangalore via Arasikere train which is declared in the 2005-06 Budget may be commissioned. I hope that this is the only connectivity from the State Headquarters to the only Port of State (Mangalore) and thousands of people and million tones of iron ore is transported to the port for shipping may be given much importance as that of the projects in Bihar, the State of the Railway Minister.

Further, the Railway Station in Hassan-Mangalore segment *i.e.* Puttur, Subramanian etc., does not have basic amenities like toilets, restroom (both for male and female) generators (Electricity supply in rural areas) need to be provided at the earliest. This route Bangalore-Hassan-Mangalore is one of the most profits making line which could be verified by getting the particulars from the Railway department.

So, earnestly request the Railway Minister not to show any hostile attitude towards Karnataka as this State is one of the most developing State and which contribute to the development of the country also. I hope that you said that you are the person responsible to make a Prime Minister of country of this State, the same love may be given while making allocations to the State railway projects also. Hope that your will forget the past and consider the request placed by me in the interest of Railway as well as on the State of Karnataka.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI (Bhadrak): Thank you, Sir. I would confine my speech to a few specific problems as the time at my disposal is very limited.

I would like to bring to your notice as well as to the notice of the hon. Minister present here that last year in the Railway Budget two specific projects were sanctioned for the State of Orissa; Sambalpur-Titlagarh and Titlagarh-Raipur doubling. It was also envisaged that these two projects will be taken up by the Rail Vikas Nigam. These

projects come under East-Coast Railway. As you know, Sir, the East-Coast Railway was approved by the Ministry of Railways after a long struggle by the State Government as well as by the people of Orissa.

I would like to bring to your notice a specific action of RVNL by which they have tried to divert the execution of these two projects. All the pre-requisite action, like the survey and the detailed project report, have been done by the East-Coast Railway. But now the RVNL has written a letter - the General Manager PI-1 has written a letter to the Additional General Manager RVNL, Bilaspur - that the execution of Sambalpur-Titlagarh doubling will be done by Kolkata and Raipur-Titlagarh work will be executed by Bilaspur division. This is how the Railway administration, Railway Ministry as also the Railway Board have tried to cripple the work of East-Coast Railways. These two particular lines come under the jurisdiction of East-Coast Railways, Bhubaneswar which has also undertaken the preliminary work like survey and DPR. If I am permitted, I would like to quote his name. General Manager PI-1 has written a letter to the Additional General Manager, RVNL, Bilaspur that these two projects will be executed by Kolkata, that is South-Eastern Railway and also by the South-East Central Railway, whose headquarters is at Bilaspur. This is the case of utter negligence on the part of the Railway Ministry towards East-Coast Railway. When these two projects come under the jurisdiction of East-Coast Railway how can they be executed by the South-Eastern Railway and the South-East Central Railway? This is certainly an action on the part of the Railway Ministry to neglect the State of Orissa and to cripple the working of the East-Coast Railway at Bhubaneswar. How can this particular gentleman write a letter saying that this particular work will be executed by Railways other than the East-Coast Railway?

Another thing I would like to bring to your kind notice. Last year, a sum of Rs. 680 crore was sanctioned for the State. You will be surprised to know that a report has come in the newspaper of Delhi saying that only Rs. 385 crore has been spent and the remaining Rs. 283 crore will be diverted. This is the case of utter negligence on the part of the Railways and discrimination against the State of Orissa. Fortunately, the Railway Minister, hon. Shri Lalu Prasadji is here. I would like to draw his attention to this point. He should clarify this point.

Another point I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister. The East Coast Railway Zone was sanctioned when the NDA was in power and Shri Nitish Kumar was the Railway Minister.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Please give me a copy of the sanction letter.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI : Which sanction letter?

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Please show me the sanction letter. ... *(Interruptions)* You are mentioning in the House that zone was sanctioned, therefore, please show me the sanction letter. ... *(Interruptions)* Please do not mislead.

[English]

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: The sanction letter must be with the Ministry of Railways. How can I have that sanction letter? Everybody knows including this hon. House that this particular zone was sanctioned during the NDA regime. ... *(Interruptions)*. He is at the helm of affairs. He can find it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI LALU PRASAD: You put up that letter and I will implement it.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Sir, I am a Member of this House. How can I go into his Ministry and find out the letter? ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: You can have that letter through RTI if not through routine process.

[English]

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: At that time, it was announced in the speech of the Railway Minister. Now you have also delivered your speech and made some announcements. So, should we not believe you?

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Please furnish that letter.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: It is mentioned in the Railway Minister's speech.

[English]

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Sir, I will be very thankful to the hon. Minister of Railways if he places a copy of the sanctioned letter on the Table of the House so that everybody could know when it was sanctioned. What is the harm in it? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Sir, the East Coast Railway was sanctioned after much persuasion, demand and also much labour both by the Members of Parliament and also people outside. So, I would request the Railway Minister to see that this particular Railway gets activated fully. Sir, I can place a copy of the letter written by the Rail Vikas Nigam. If you allow me to place it on the Table, I would place it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can give it to the hon. Minister.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: All right. I will hand it over to the hon. Railway Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Please send the sanction letter.

[English]

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: The letter was issued by the General Manager, Rail Vikas Nigam.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI ARJUN SETHI: Sir, please give me only one minute.

Sir, my parliamentary constituency is Bhadrak. The Bhadrak station was declared as one of the model stations not only in the State of Orissa but also in the entire Railway stem. Today if anyone would visit that station any time, he would be surprised to see that there is not even platform shelter in the station. There is no lighting arrangements and also all other amenities that are supposed to be there are absent.

One ROB was sanctioned tor Orissa in between Boudpur and Bhadrak stations and it was assured by the hon. Minister of State for Railways that it would be completed and operationalised by February, 2008. Today we are in the month of March. So, I would like to request the hon. Minister to look into these matters and see to it that this ROB is made functional at the earliest.

[Translation]

SHRI SURAJ SINGH (Balia, Bihar): Sir, while presenting the railway budget for the financial year 2008-09, the hon. Minister of Railways has tried to mainly highlight the increase in the annual profit of the railways. He started his Budget speech, by mentioning achievements of the railways in regard to making profits. Though this is the budget for the year 2008-09 but he has tried to impress the people by adding the profits of the previous years. He has shown a profit of Rs. 68768 during the last year and projected a profit of Rs. 25 thousand crore in the current financial year of 2008-09.

However, the authenticity of the claim is still doubtful. The hon. Minister has mentioned about a scheme for the development of railways in the next five years. It is a scheme worth Rs. 2 lakh 50 thousand crore out of which he wants to invite private sector investment upto Rs. one lakh crore. In order to attract this investment, he has fixed a return of 14% on the capital investment. The point to be considered is that an organisation with an expected profit of Rs. 25 thousand crore is fixing a return of 14% on an investment of Rs. One lakh crore for the implementation of schemes worth Rs. 2.5 lakh crore in the coming five years. It seems that there are two probable reasons for it. Either the profits are unrealistic or private sector is being given an opportunity to earn undue profits.

In his speech the hon. Minister has expressed his commitment to make railways an affordable, competent and profitable public transport system. Very humbly, I would like to request that in view of this objective, he has given a detailed description of passenger amenities covering 22 paragraphs of his speech but after going through these paras, I found that 18 of them just describe the commitments made for the future only. Besides, no time limit has been fixed for fulfilment of most of these commitments. It seems the Ministry of Railways wants to keep the public under an illusion by making tall claims.

Railways imposed a safety surcharge on passengers in the year 2001-02 with an assurance that it would be recovered till 2006-07 and the funds collected through it would be utilized to prevent accidents thereby making

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

railways accident free. However, the figures given by the railways itself are proving that accidents could not be prevented. As against 473 major accidents occurred during that period, 200 accidents are still taking place. There are 16,600 manned railway level crossings but 18,200 are unmanned. Out of the total accidents taken place in the year 2001, 15% happened at these unmanned railway level crossings but this figure has now increased to 37%. These official figures clearly depict that the railway administration is not serious enough to check the accidents. The need to appoint gatemen on these crossings has been accepted in principle but the time-limit by which safety arrangements at the crossings would be provided to prevent accidents has not been made clear till date.

I would like to clarify one more thing that the railway has forgotten the commitment it had made to the people while imposing safety surcharge. The surcharge was imposed for the period up to 31st March 2007 but now the railway department has issued a circular by which it would be continued as developmental surcharge for the forthcoming years. As per my information more than one thousand crore rupees have already been recovered under it.

For the past many years it has been the practice that concessions are announced at the time of presenting the budget but later on recovery is made from the common people in a clandestine manner. The Government has imposed a surcharge on iron ore thrice in this year alone and recovered it at the rate of more than 100%.

Though the present Government claims to be the protagonist of the common man and also claims to give concessions to them, however, an agreement was made last year with Reliance Logistics, Lloyed Steel and Ispat Industries whereby concession of 5-20% in the freight rate will be given to these companies till March 2010.

On the one hand, Railways is being projected as a profitable organization while on the other, developmental schemes are being hampered due to lack of funds. New schemes are launched every year but the previous ones remain pending. 284 projects were under construction and were monitored by the statistical department of the Government. Out of these, 150 projects are such wherein the cost of construction has exceeded the original cost by 55% and 33 projects are under construction since 3 years and 13 months and as per my information, most of these projects are in the State of Bihar.

Sir, I would now like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister towards a problem in my constituency. A railway line is being constructed between Sakri to Hasanpur but this railway line is going towards Bengal, Orissa and other regions of the southern India without touching Barauni. This line takes a detour covering Samastipur and Khagadiya which will result in wastage of time and money for the passengers. Hasanpur and Barauni are the two major industrial areas in the region. Moreover, agricultural production, especially sugarcane production is done at a large-scale in this region. This region is also important from the point of view of tourism. There is no railway connectivity between Hasanpur and Barauni. This railway line is important in so far as it facilitates the travel of the people who live in far-flung areas in the region. Hence, I would like to request the government that the proposed Sakri-Hasanpur railway line be extended upto Barauni Junction. This will result in the development of industries, agriculture and tourism in the region and additional avenues of employment would be generated for the backward classes and dalits in the region.

Sir, I would like to suggest that the government should increase efficiency and only then would it be able to transform the railways into a reliable, efficient and inexpensive transport system. Railway employees are the backbone of the railways. I am surprised that an organisation which is earning Rs. 20-25 thousand crore as profits has increased the bonus for its employees by merely five days. Sixty-five days' pay was being given as bonus for the last few years which has been increased to 70 days from the current year. I would like to say that the efficiency of the employees would increase only if they are satisfied and their efficiency would in turn take the efficiency of the organisation to greater heights.

With these words I conclude.

*SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD (Salempur): Sir, the budge presented by the hon. Railway Minister for the year 2008-09 reflects more of a fiction than fact, a mere jugglery of figures. Basic facts have been ignored by him in the process of presenting a popular budget. Right from his first budget speech, the Railway Minister has been announcing new schemes in successive budgets but no account is given as to the number of these schemes that have been actually implemented. There are many schemes which were announced in the earlier budget speeches but have not been implemented till now. I would like to remind the hon. Minister that in his second budget

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Hari Kewal Prasad]

speech he had announced that a survey for laying of new railway line under Northeastern Railway in Uttar Pradesh from Barhaj Bazar to Faizabad via Dohri Ghat would be conducted but I am disappointed to say that this important public interest work has not been completed as yet.

The hon. Railway Minister has again announced reduction in railway fares as he has been doing in the previous budgets. But in actual terms, as in the previous year, the concessions are a mere eyewash. Last year also, the passenger fares had been reduced but passengers were forced to fork-out a lot more by other means. Higher fares were charged by according the status of superfast trains to ordinary trains without upgrading the facilities provided therein in any manner. Charges of return reservation were hiked and the period for buying tickets under the Tatkal system has been advanced and huge profits have been earned by increasing the charges for Tatkal reservation. This year too, the hon. Minister has conned the people very smartly while announcing reduction in passenger fares. For example, the reduction would be applicable only on coaches of new design in some classes. It is evident that this year would come to an end by the time these new coaches are manufactured and the passengers would be deprived of the benefits of reduction in fares. For other classes also, the concession is proposed to be halved during the peak season. Passenger amenities have been totally ignored in the railway budget. Provision for safe drinking water is sadly lacking in most stations and trains. Similarly, the quality of food being provided in trains is getting worse but it is being sold at higher rates, but this point has not been touched upon at all in the budget proposals. Similarly, announcement about recruitment in Railway Police has been made in the name of passenger security but no mention of incidents of misbehaviour and looting by the personnel of railway police or of measures proposed to be taken to check such incidents has been made. Incidents of sedation of passengers, misbehaviour with women and looting on trains are on the rise but no mention has been made in the budget regarding any measures to check such incidents.

Sir, the Railway Minister has announced more than sixty new trains this year as he does every year merely to gain popularity. In this too, he has acted very cleverly. Out of the 53 new trains announced by him, eight would be started after the gauge conversion on the proposed routes takes place. One train would be run after a new rail line is laid and two other trains after cancelling two existing trains running on the route. From this, it is clear that the passengers would not be able to avail the facility of eleven trains at present. There has been a lot of discrimination in the matter of route distribution among the new trains. The largest State in the country, Uttar Pradesh has been given only four trains whereas Bihar has been gifted 19 new trains. Similarly, out of the ten new Garib Raths only one is proposed for Uttar Pradesh. Further, the major trains originating form Bihar and terminating at Delhi or going beyond, which were introduced in the last two budgets, have stoppages at very few stations in Uttar Pradesh. A look at the budget proposals makes it clear that Uttar Pradesh has been grossly neglected. The current railway budget has set a target of laying 350 km of new railway line out of which one line falls in Bihar and the other three in South India. I have no objection to this but I would like to urge that the new railway line projects for Uttar Pradesh which have been held-up should also be included in the budget proposals. A target for gauge conversion of 2150 km of railway track has been set in the budget which include Mathura-Achnera and Audihar-Jaunpur line in Uttar Pradesh. I would like to remind the hon. Railway Minister that he had announced gauge conversion of both these sections in the railway budget of the previous year as well but work has not been initiated on either of these lines. Frequency of 16 trains has been increased in the current budget, out of which just one train passes through Uttar Pradesh.

The hon. Railway Minister follows a socialist ideology. Hence he is expected to adopt an evenhanded approach rather than a discriminatory attitude towards some States or regions. I would, in all humility, like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister towards another public announcement. In view of the problems being faced by the passengers travelling on the Gorakhpur-Chhapra section of North Eastern Railway, he had made a pulbic announcement at my request, in August 2007 during an assembly in Gorakhpur, the headquarters of North Eastern Railway, that an Intercity Express train would be introduced between Chhapra and Gorakhpur shortly. But neither the train has been introduced so far nor any mention of it has been made in the budget proposals for this year. I would urge the hon. Minister of Railways to keep his words and introduce this train as soon as possible. In the Railway Budget of 2008-09, there is a proposal to construct nearly 100 new ROBs and RUBs. A proposal for constructing an over bridge at the southern end of Salempur Junction on the Bhatni-Varanasi section in North-Eastern Railway has been pending for long with the

Ministry of Railways. The department had conducted a survey to assess the daily rush of traffic at this road, (Dhala), which is nearly 1.5 lakh vehicles per day. The construction of this overbridge could not be started even after meeting all the required standards. I would like to demand from the hon. Railway Minister to start the construction of this overbridge on priority basis and also take effective action for constructing an overbridge at the southern end of Bilthara Road railway station on this section.

Sir, it has been announced in the rail budget that licensed porters would be appointed as Gangmen and on other group-D posts in the railways on a one time basis. This is a good step, but I want that hon. Railway Minister should pay attention towards those casual railway employees who worked really hard for a period of 100 days or more in various railway projects and were subsequently fired. They are in economic crisis. In some cases courts have issued orders in favour of a number of workers but even then, they have not been able to get justice. I would like to urge that as long as these casual railway employees who have worked with the railways in the past are not reinstated, new recruitments in group-D category should not be made in the railways. Modernisation of workshops and factories in railways has been proposed in the rail budget. Loco shed in Gorakhpur, the headquarters of the North-Eastern Railway, occupied a pride of place but for the last few years it has been neglected and there is a high probability that in future it will either be closed down or demolished. Keeping in mind, the importance of this loco shed and the future of employees working in it I would like to urge the hon. Railway Minister to kindly include the Gorakhpur loco shed for modernization under the current budget proposals.

Sir, the work of strengthening and improving the infrastructure of railways is very slow and insufficient. Every year populist announcements are made in the railway budget to attract the attention of people but neither sufficient budgetary provisions are made for strengthening the infrastructure of the railway nor any immediate and serious efforts are made in this direction. In the present railway budget, many important old railway projects have been sidelined. Doubling of Barabanki-Chhapra section has been going on for the last 15 years and is still incomplete. Similarly doubling of Lucknow-Varanasi section has been crawling at a very slow pace for the last one decade. In the budget proposals it has been mentioned about electrification of the Gonda-Barauni railway line of the North-Eastern Railway that the same has been sanctioned last year itself whereas the reality is that no work has been initiated on this so far. Similarly for the year 2008-2009 a target of doubling of upto 1000 kilometer railway line has been set in the proposals, but no mention has been made as to doubling of which railway sections will take place. There is a mention of the survey conducted for doubling of line from Audihaar to Varanasi on Bhatani–Varanasi section of the North-Eastern Railway. I would like to urge that doubling of this entire railway section *i.e.* from Bhatani to Varanasi rail section should be carried out as soon as possible. I would like to demand from the hon. Railway Minister that in the interest of railway passengers and the railways, a small spare parts manufacturing unit be setup on the vacant railway land near Bhatani junction in North-Eastern Railway. Rest rooms should be constructed at Salempur junction and Bilthara Road Stations selected for upgradation as model stations, modernization and renovation should be carried out at the Bhatpur Rani railway station and a provision for computerized reservation should also be made. Stoppage of Bihar Sampark Kranti and Garib Rath should be provided at Devaria Sadar station for the benefit of the passengers. Similarly, stoppage of Durga Express at Salempur and Bilthara Road and the Intercity Express at Nunurwar and Kidhirapur should be restored. Stoppage of Krishak Express at Nunurwar should also be restored. Stoppage of Lichhavi Express running between New Delhi and Muzaffarpur has been discontinued from one side at the Lar Road Station, and the same should be reintroduced. The train running from Barhaj to Bhatni should be extended from Barhaj Bazar to Gorakhpur and upto Chhapra and Varanasi. Tamsa train should be reintroduced and its route extended from Varanasi to Bhatni. The route of Kafiat Express train running between Delhi and Azamgarh should be extended upto Mau Junction. The traders who are earning their livelihood by running small kiosks in the railway premises at the Salempur Junction railway station for the last three decades should be allotted shops on the basis of the circular issued by the Railway Board. With these words I support the proposed Rail Budget.

[English]

*SHRI SHRINIWAS DADASAHEB PATIL (Karad): I would like to lay down the following points while discussion is going on Railway Budget of 2008-2009.

1. Stoppage of Kolhapur-Ahmedabad weekly train at Karad Railway station on Pune-Miraj section of Central Railway.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Shriniwas Dadasaheb Patil]

2. Survey of new line between Karad to Chiplun has been sanctioned in Railway budget 2007. The survey work may be completed on priority.

3. 2779/2780 Goa Express should have one more 3A boggie. At present two 2A boggie with only one 3A boggie is attached. The train should have two 2A boggies and two 3A boggies.

4. Shelter over loading platform at Karad Railway station.

5. Bangalore-H. Nizamuddin Rajdhani Express should run via Hubli, Miraj, Pune once a week.

6. City Reservation Office may be started at Karad, Satara and Islampur.

7. Loading and unloading facilities may be developed at Takari Railway Station.

8. Ahimsa Express should be back extended up to Kolhapur.

9. Railway crossing gate at Bhawaninagar needs to be kept open in view of the increased traffic.

10. Adequate water supply needs to be provided at Karad Railway Station.

11. Waiting rooms at Karad Railway station needs renovation.

12. Pune-Ernakulam weekly express may be extended up to Thiruvananthapuram.

[Translation]

MOHD. MUKEEM (Dumariaganj): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the railway budget. I will conclude after saying a few things about my constituency because I know the time constraint. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister towards my constituency. The Gorakhpur-Gonda loop line which was sanctioned many years back, has not been converted into a broad gauge line because of non-allocation of funds. The work over there is gong on at a very slow pace. I would like to urge the hon. Railway Minister to allocate funds in the current railway budget so that the conversion of Gorakhpur-Gonda loop line which was to be completed many years back, can be completed soon.

There is a long pending demand of our constituency. Last year also I had raised my voice in the House about that problem. Survey of a new railway line between Sahjanwa to Balrampur was conducted a long time back. I believe that the survey was conducted in the year 1972. So far no work has taken place over there. That area of our constituency remains untouched by any railway line. Therefore, through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister that the survey has been completed for laying a new railway line from Sahjanwa to Mahdawal, Basi, Dumariaganj and Balrampur via Utraila. It should be sanctioned in the current budget and the work be started on the same.

Now, I will conclude with this last statement. A large number of people of Uttar Pradesh are living in Mumbai and Maharashtra and they regularly commute to these places. Only two trains are running via Basti-Gonda for Mumbai due to which the people over there have to face a lot of difficulties in commuting. I would urge the hon. Railway Minister to announce a new railway line from Gorakhpur to Mumbai via Basti-Gonda.

With these words, while supporting the railway budget, I conclude.

*SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI (Rewa): Sir, I was listening to the speech of the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasadji with rapt attention. On the face of it this budget seems to be quite alluring and attractive but in reality it is dreadful and far from the reality. Hon. Railway Minister has aptly stated that Indian Railways has surprised a lot of people by setting new records daily. Leave the other people, you have surprised even your villagers by your magic. You have announced to introduce a daily Hazipur-Phulmaria passenger train after completion of new railway track. This new railway track is likely to be laid in about seven years' time. It would have been better if you had announced this train after completion of this railway track.

Likewise, you have announced to introduce 53 new trains at point No. 106 in your budget speech, out of which 9 trains will be introduced after gauge conversion. Likewise it has been announced to extend the route of 16 trains, out of which 3 trains will be extended after gauge-conversion. There is no time bound action plan for completion of gauge conversion. It would have been better if you had announced to introduce these trains after

*Speech was laid on the Table.

completion of gauge conversion and your announcement would have been meaningful.

Shri Ashok Bhatnagar, ex-chairman of Railway Board has reacted to these hollow announcements and Tughlaqi schemes that the present scheme of things in the railway budget will work for only a few years. If the things remain the same, the railways will be exhausted in a span of five to ten years.

One can't comprehend when Railway Minister is presenting a budget with 25,000 crore rupees as surplus, then why he is asking for budgetary support. On the one hand Railway Minister is appropriating applause from the public for not increasing the fare but on the other hand he has applied a new trick for taking money out of the passengers' pockets indirectly by increasing the Tatkal reservation quota by fifty percent in all important trains. The passengers have been burdened with an additional burden of about thousand crores of rupees by way of levying 20, 15 and 10 rupees respectively on return journey reservation ticket.

The Hon. Railway Minister has misled the countrymen by making populist announcements of reducing fare. In fact, the fares will be reduced only during two months - August and September - the lean season. The Minister has proposed to reduce the fares for all the classes. But this proposal will be implemented after the coaches of new design are introduced. About 45,000 coaches will be required for the trains on all routes. But our rail coach factories have the capacity to produce 2,600 coaches every year. Thus, it will take 15 to 16 years to produce 45,000 coaches. This dream can be fulfilled only if the countrymen have the patience for so long as well as hon. Lalu Prasadji remains the Railway Minister for the said period.

A perusal of the speech of hon. Railway Minister on railway budget 2007-08 becomes necessary in order to know as to what extent he implements his announcements : -

1. The Railway Minister had announced to introduce 23 new trains in 2007-08, out of which total 18 trains were introduced.

2. Eight new Garib Raths were announced but a total of five Garib Raths have been introduced till date.

3. It was proposed to lay 2000 kilometre railway line out of which only 800 kilometre railway line could be laid.

4. 300 kilometre railway line has been covered under gauge-conversion out of 1800 kilometre railway line proposed for gauge-conversion.

5. It was announced to double 700 kilometre stretch but only 150 kilometre long track was doubled.

6. It was announced to make recruitment for 8000 vacancies in RPF but that announcement is still pending.

Madhya Pradesh, especially the Vindhya region which includes my Parliamentary Constituency Rewa has been neglected in the railway budget. It was proposed to get a survey conducted for Rewa to Mirzapur railway line in the previous budget and I had thanked the hon. Railway Minister personally but no amount has been allocated for the said survey in this budget. I request the Minister to provide for the said survey in supplementary budget. The residents of Vindhya region are thankful to the Railway Minister for introducing Rewa-Jabalpur intercity express on my request. I request the hon. Minister to get one or two AC Chair cars attached to the said train and provide for cushioned seats in this train. At the same time I would like to request the hon. Railway Minister to implement the following works which do not have any big financial implications but will be very beneficial for the people of Rewa division.

1. Hon. Minister has given assurances regarding change in the time-schedule of Rewa-Delhi superfast express many times but that schedule has not been changed till now. Please ensure that this train reaches Rewa and Delhi at 9 am.

2. Rewanchal Express running between Rewa and Bhopal should be extended upto Habibganj. Earlier this train used to stop at Habibganj when it used to go to Bhopal via Jabalpur four days a week. Now this train goes to Bhopal via Sagar. It should be extended to Habibganj and would be very convenient for the passengers.

3. A DMU train should be introduced between Rewa and Allahabad.

4. Rewa-Chirmiri-Bilaspur passenger should be extended upto Durg and an AC-III tier coach should be attached to this train.

[Shri Chandra Mani Tripathi]

5. Jabalpur-Mumbai Garib Rath should be extended upto Rewa and it should run on three days in a week.

6. Rajkot Express should be extended upto Rewa.

7. Two minutes' stoppage of Chhipra and Mahanagari Express should be provided at Dabhaura station in Rewa district.

I hope that the hon. Railway Minister will consider my demands and include the said demands in the supplementary budget during this budget session.

SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA (Sangrur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. My colleague Shri Jai Prakashji was saying that the opposition merely critisises, they do not praise even the good steps taken. But when the Government presents the budget be it General Budget or Railway Budget, the opposition parties highlight the shortcomings of the budget. I am grateful to the hon. Minister who has introduced a train from Anandpur Saheb to Nanded. He also belongs to Patna, Bihar. Guru Gobind Singh ji was born there. He has done a stupendous thing. I am grateful to him and I would like to thank him.

Punjab contributes 50 percent foodgrains to the Central pool and it is industrialized also. Ludhiana has the largest industrial area in the State. It produces textiles, cycles and its spare parts.

I think Ludhiana produces maximum goods in India. I would like to urge the hon. Minister to extend the two rail freight corridors. First one is from Sonanagar to Ludhiana. I urge the hon. Minister to extend it upto Attari. Amritsar. Recently the hon. Prime Minister has said that the time to have good relations with Pakistan has come. Attari, being closer to the border is a very important station. If our country commences trade with Pakistan, it will be through Attari. Therefore, in view of it, the proposed corridor upto Ludhiana may be extended upto Attari. Secondly, industrial corridor proposed between Mumbai-Delhi should be extended upto Ludhiana. It is urgently needed, especially in view of our daily difficulties. Thirdly there has been a demand for linking Chandigarh to Ludhiana, for long. I think people have been demanding the said link since our independence. Its one stretch is upto Murinda and survey has already been completed for Murinda-Ludhiana stretch. We have been demanding a link between Murinda-Ludhiana. But the budget is silent about it. I think there is an urgent need of said link as in absence of it people are facing lot of problems.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to make a point about Shatabdi Express. The hon. Minister as well as the department had said that next year they would bring down the travelling distance to Chandigarh to two and a half hours in place of present three hours. In this regard, I would like to bring it to the attention of the hon. Minister that the said train never reached Chandigarh from Delhi in less than three and a half hours as it halts at some stations for more time. I do not know why it is so.

17.52 hrs.

[SHRI ARJUN SETHI *in the Chair*]

Just now some of my colleagues made a mention of low quality meals being served in trains. I request the hon. Minister to change departure time of Shatabdi Express from Chandigarh. At present, the said train departs at 6.20 O'clock. If its time is changed to 5.15 O'clock, people won't need meals and it will be convenient for them. The departure time of morning train from there is alright, but it would be better if departure of evening train is advanced by an hour. This train faces heavy rush. Though 3-4 additional bogies have been attached, yet the rush still remains. Amritsar bound Shatabdi, used to stop at Sirhind earlier, as it is an important station. Now it does not stop there. I would urge the hon. Minister to provide stoppage of the said train at Sirhind.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, not taking much time, I would like to make two-three points about my parliamentary constituency, Sangrur, a district headquarters also. I wrote a letter also to the hon. Minister requesting him for a train between Bhatinda-Delhi, via Dhuri, Jakhal. Secondly, being a district headquarters, I urge for a direct train between Sangrur-Delhi via Jakhal. If the said train plies via Sangrur, Sunam, Lohardaga, Hissar, the people of these areas will be grateful to you. Some trains, like 1527, 1528 run on trial basis between Bhatinda-Dhuri. If these trains are made regular, I would be highly thankful to the hon. Minister. If Sachkhand Express, running between Jakhal-Rohtak via Dhuri is diverted on this route

for three days a week people will be thankful. If Akal Takhat Express, which goes to Sealdah, is made to run once a week via Dhuri, Rohtak, it will be greatly convenient for the people. At the end, I would say that trains like Jakhal-Jammu Tawi, Jaipur-Amritsar and even Dhauladhar Express do not stop at Sunam and Sangrur putting the people of this area to grave inconvenience. There is a need to provide stoppage of these trains at both these places. I have written to the hon. Minister requesting for extension of 1LJ, 3LJ, 5LJ and 7LJ from Hissar upto Amritsar. I will be grateful if my demand is fulfilled. With these words I conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY (Bellary): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I seek your permission to speak from this seat.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Okay. Shri G. Karunakara Reddy, I just take a minute. Please sit down.

18.00 hrs.

It is now Six of the Clock. I have a long list of hon. Members here. If the hon. Members agree, I can extend the time of the debate beyond Six of the Clock. Shall I extend the time by another one hour or till the debate is over?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): Let it be up to Eight of the Clock in the evening.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, the time is extended till the debate is over. Is it all right?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. Shri Karunakara Reddy, you can continue your speech.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Sir, have you suspended the 'Zero Hour' today? *...(Interruptions)* Is there 'Zero Hour' today?

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Another 80 hon. Members are still in the List to speak.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: We want to know from the Chair about it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Karunakara Reddy, you continue your speech. More than 80 hon. Members are there to speak.

[Translation]

*SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY (Bellary): I would like to draw the kind attention of the Union Government and the Hon'ble Railway Minister that Railways are getting more than Rs. 1,500 crores income every year from Bellary. Bellary District has a glorious past and presently developing in the spheres like major Steel Plants, Power Generating Units, Oxygen Plants, Sponge Iron and Allied Manufacturing Units, etc. and also my Bellary District is having a World Heritage Centre HAMPI. Thousands of foreign tourists and tourists across our country visit .this place. As a result, thousands of people belonging to these areas and abroad are in need of enormous and extensive Railway transport facilities. During the last four years, I am repeatedly requesting the Minister to provide/meet the following most important demands:-

First and foremost thing to be done, according to me and needs, a medical team (doctors, nurses along with emergency medicines) should be present/posted in each and every long distance trains as the passengers are facing huge problems on emergency situations.

Kottur-Harihara Railway line forms an important link between two coasts, East and West. The line, on completion, would enable movement of iron ore to all the three Ports, Mangalore, Chennai and Vizag Ports and on return journey, goods train can carry fertilizers, coal, cement and other products. The foundation stone was laid nearly 10 years back and work is going in a very slow pace. The line which is economically viable should be given more emphasis.

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*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

[Shri G. Karunakara Reddy]

I would like to emphasis that the Hon'ble Minister, during the visit of delegation from Karnataka on 7th November 2006, has agreed that this project can be converted into 50:50 sharing basis between the Centre and the State Government instead of 2/3rd by State and 1/3rd by Centre, as the Karnataka is facing shortage of funds. The total cost of the project is Rs. 270 crores and the Central Government has allocated a total sum of Rs. 67.40 crores, including Rs. 30 crores allocated during the current year's Budget, and the State Government, on its part, has allocated a sum of Rs. 70 crores. If the Central Government allocates Rs. 70 crores more, the Centre's assurance would be fulfilled on 50:50 sharing basis and the work on this most important railway line can be taken up on war-footing basis. I urge upon the Railway Minister to consider my request and allot the funds of Rs. 70 crores more (apart from Rs. 30 crores already allocated in the current Budget) for this project.

*Sir, recently, the passengers of Bellary Railway Station is facing a peculiar problem that whenever a goods train as well as passenger train are coming at a time to the Station, the authorities are giving preference to the goods train and taking the goods train at the platform where passenger train has to come and because of this, the passenger train is arriving at the next line which is causing great difficulties to the passengers, especially to the elder persons, students and sick people to switch over the next platform. This practice should be avoided and the authorities should give preference to the passenger trains. I request the Railway Minister to look into the matter urgently.

Bellary City is thickly populated place having a population of nearly 5 lakhs. One railway line (LC: 110) near Sudha Cross in Hospet is crossing at the National Highway No. 63 between Ankola-Gooty Section. Due to heavy mining activities, number of goods trains carries iron ore to different parts of country causes frequent closure of the railway gates not less than 30 to 40 times. Due to this, vehicular traffic is frequently jammed. Most of the time, school buses are also caught jammed and students are also greatly suffered as 90% of the schools are located at this area. This requires immediate Road Over Bridge.

National Highway No. 13 of Sholapur-Mangalore Section crosses one railway line LC: 13 (13-14) near the Kanavi Veerabhadra Temple at Km. 298. Due to heavy mining activities, number of goods trains carries iron ore involving closure of railway gate very frequently as more than 30 times. Because of this frequent closure, thousands of vehicles are getting struck and hours together traffic jams occurring which is giving greater trouble to the people. There is an urgent need to construct a Road Under Bridge at this place for the free and smooth flow of vehicular traffic.

Sir, the Hon'ble Railway Minister, in his Budget Speech, has made a point of construction of RUBs and ROBs on 100% funding by the Central Government. He has also mentioned that the Railways would explore the possibility of construction of ROBs through BOT under PPP and viability gap funding would also be provided, if necessary.

The above two proposals, i.e. (i) construction of Road Over Bridge (ROB) at railway line (LC: 110) near Sudha Cross in Hospet at the National Highway No. 63 between Ankola-Gooty Section; and (ii) Road Under Bridge (RUB) in National Highway No. 13 of Sholapur-Mangalore Section crosses one railway line LC : 13(13-14) near the Kanavi Veerabhadra Temple at Km. 298, be taken up on 100% funding by the Central Government as the State Government is having limited resources.

Sir, I would like to mention the important problems being faced by the people of my Constituency, Belllary. Sir, the people of Bellary and nearby areas have to wait for long time to book the tickets as the Reservation Counters in Bellary Station is very meager in numbers.

The number of Reservation Counters should be increased. Hence, I urge upon the Railway Minister to consider this matter and increase the Reservation Counter at Bellary Railway Station by 2 to 3 nos. which will reduce the precious time of the people.

Sir, the people of Bellary are facing great hardships to reach Mysore and Gulbarga as there is no proper rail

*English translation of this part of the speech originally laid on the table in Kannada.

connectivity to Mysore or Gulbarga from Bellary. At present, there is a train running between Mysore and Gulbarga. The people of Bellary are demanding that this train should run via Bellary so that it can solve their problems to a great extent. I urge upon the Minister to issue necessary instructions to the authorities concerned to change the route of this train and may run via Bellary in future.

The Hampi Express which is running between Hubli and Bangalore is having only one General Compartment and very less number of Sleeper Class Coaches. The common people those who are travelling in General Compartment and Sleeper Class are facing lot of difficulties due to shortage of coaches. I request you to include two more General Compartments, five more Sleeper Coaches and two more 3 Tier A.C. coaches in this train for the benefit of common people.

Restoration of Guntakal-Gadag Passenger Train. This train was running between Guntakal and Gadag before gauge conversion.

But even after the completion of gauge conversion, this train has not yet been restored till now.

Amaravathi Express used to depart from Bellary at 7.25 A.M. daily which suits many commuters who are more than 300 travelling Hospet from Bellary which is very convenient. But now, this is changed to 5.20 AM which is very inconvenient and there is an urgent need to change the timings of the train as per previous schedule. I am demanding for this since long time and nothing has been done so far.

There is an immediate need for introduction of another direct train from Chennai to Mumbai and *vice versa* via Bellary and Hospet as this is the long-cherished dream of the people of this region.

Arranging for departure of Hampi Express (Train No. 6591/6592) from Bellary at 6.45 AM instead of 6.00 AM by making up loose time.

Advancing of departure of Bangalore-Hospet Passenger (Train No. 583/584) from Bellary to Hospet at 8.00 AM instead of 10.45 AM by making up loose time.

I urge the Minister that more facilities to be provided at Hubli which will be benefiting its status as Zonal Headquarters.

I would also like to draw the kind attention of the Railway Minister to the fact that there are no day-time trains between Guntakal and Hubli causing lot of hardships to the passenger, public and employees of the region. Prior to gauge conversion, there were several trains passing through Bellary during the day and I request through you Sir, to kindly re-introduce all the trains prevailing prior to gauge-conversion.

Bellary and Koppal belongs to Gulbarga revenue division and people of these districts have to visit Gulbarga very frequently. But as it is, there is no direct train facility to Gulbarga. Therefore, I strongly urge to introduce a direct train from Koppal through Bellary to Gulbarga via Guntakal.

It is the demand of our people that the Inter-city train between Bangalore-Hubli is connected in Chikkajajur from Bellary so that the benefit of the inter-city train is extended to the people of Bellary and Koppal.

Sir, the Train No. 311 Bellary-Miraj and 312 Miraj-Bellary may kindly be extended to Guntakal which will have a larger benefit for the people who seek a connection for various trains at Guntakal. This is also a long pending demand of this region.

I would suggest the following few options to mitigate the inconvenience of train travellers:-

(i) Arranging for departure of Hampi Express (Train No. 6591/6592) from Bellary at 6.45 AM instead of 6.00 AM by making up loose time;

(ii) Advancing of departure of Bangalore-Hospet Passenger (Train No. 583/584) from Bellary to Hospet at 8.00 AM instead of 10.45 AM by making up loose time;

(iii) Extending Bangalore-Hospet Passenger (Train No. 583/584) upto Gadag and arranging for departure from Gadag at 3.00 P.M. daily;

(iv) Restoration of Guntakal-Gadag Passenger Train. This train was running between Guntakal and Gadag before gauge conversion. But even after

[Shri G. Karunakara Reddy]

the completion of gauge conversion, this train has not yet been restored till now; and

(v) Arrange to make stoppage of Train No. 2847/ 2848 at Koppal Railway Station being a District Headquarters.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude. Next, Chaudhary Lal Singh to speak.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:* I urge upon the Railway Minister to introduce a push-pull train between Guntakal and Kottur and Guntakal to Gadag as this will immensely help the common people, especially office goers and students, of these areas.

Because of industrial development, every day, thousands of employees and the people connected with business of these industries are travelling from various places. To commute the employees from Bellary, Hospet and Koppal, these industries are running number of buses suiting to their shift timings. In view of this, I request the Minister to introduce the Push-Pull Shuttle train between Bellary and Koppal suiting to the working hours of the above industries. This will be of great help and assistance to the employees and public of this part of Karnataka.*

SHRI D.V. SADANAND GOWDA (Mangalore): Sir, let me take just a minute. Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav, on the other day, told that he had much love towards Karnataka; he made Shri H.D. Devegowda from Karnataka the Prime Minister of India. Let him have the same love towards Karnataka as far as the Railway Budget is concerned. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. No. Nothing will go on record.

*... (Interruptions)**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Karunakara Reddy, please conclude now. I have already called the name of Chaudhary Lal Singh.

SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY:* I also request the Railway Minister to take up the work of modernization of Hospet and Bellary Railway Stations upto International Standards as these are the most important Railway Stations in the State and lot of international tourists are visiting these places.

Hospet in Bellary District is an important city with World Heritage Centre—Hampi, the international tourist destination nearby. Huge numbers of foreign tourists are visiting this international tourist spot, Hampi. Apart from thousands of tourists thronging the city, a large number of office-goers travel between these two cities daily. Therefore, there is an urgent need to ply a push-pull train between the two cities not only for the benefit of office-goers but also to those wanting to visit Hampi. Hampi, being the international tourist spot, located in Bellary District, is also a World Heritage Centre. Lots of foreign tourists and Indian tourists are visiting this place. There is an urgent need to run a Palace On Wheels train in this important tourist spot.

The above proposals are some of the most important demands of the people of Bellary. I urge upon the Union Government and the Hon'ble Railway Minister to take immediate action and fulfil the above all genuine demands of the people.*

*SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHAUHAN (Sriganganagar): Sir, the railway budget presented on 26 February reflects completely partisan and narrow approach. While presenting the budget the hon. Minister of Railways might have thought that it would benefit the UPA in the Elections. But in my view Railway Budget 2008-09 will derail the UPA train even before the elections. People feel that the concessions provided by Laluji are misleading. For example out of the passengers travelling in 3600 bogies, concession will be applicable to the passengers of 200 bogies only and in some cases most of the passengers have been deprived of it on the pretext of either distance or class of journey, as has been reflected in the budget.

The Railway Minister has done partiality with BJP ruled States. The budget has sent a signal that the Ministry has silently paved the way for privatization. The

*... *English translation of this part of the speech originally laid on the Table in Kannada.

*Not recorded.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

budget has been prepared keeping the upper and middle-class in mind. The budget has done no good for people travelling in local trains. Further, for setting the election arithmetic right, the Minister forgot certain things which needed to be given priority. Train accidents have become a common affair. Not only during his regime but accidents have been occurring during previous regimes also. Major accidents are a separate issue as there is a need to take measures at large scale to check them. Here I want to mention about minor accidents which take place when passengers fall from trains while boarding or alighting from a overcrowded train.

In case of those people who die on the spot the Government Railway Police conducts the inquiry and hands over the dead body to the relatives after completing other formalities. But there is no facility for rushing those accident victims to the hospitals at small and medium railway stations who get injured on railway lines or platforms.

The Hon. Railway Minister, Sir, if the railways is earning that much of revenue then it must provide some funds for making arrangements for stretchers, first aid boxes and ambulances at the railway stations. This will cost only a total of Rs. 100 crores. There should be direct contact with the nearest district hospitals where it is not possible.

If the railways is unable to make such arrangements at present then cooperation should be sought from the self-help groups and they must be provided grants for this. Along with 'Athiti Devo Bhava', it should also have 'Seva Bhav'. If no provision has been made for this in the budget, it may be included in the budget like other exigency expenditures.

Hon. Sir, Railway Minister has discriminated against Rajasthan and overlooked a number of railway demands related to my Lok Sabha constituency. While preparing the railway budget more attention should have been paid towards laying new railway tracks or changing the old tracks, signalling and telecommunication system etc. At present safety is the weakest aspect of the railways and these basic things should be paid attention. With regard to the Railway budget I would like to say that we oppose this budget which has been prepared keeping elections in view.

	Previous	Present
AC III tier	64	72 = 8
Old Sleeper Class	72	85 = 13
AC Chair Car	72	81 = 9

In the year 2001 NDA had allocated an amount of Rs. 17000 crore for the safety fund.

Overloading has also been allowed in goods trains.

Sixth Pay Commission will have an additional burden of Rs. 9000 crores on the Railways. A provision of Rs. 5000 crore has been made in the railway budget, wherefrom the remaining Rs. 4000 crores will be mobilized? Sriganganagar, Hanumangarh, Surtgarh are far flung areas of Rajasthan and are along the international border. There is also frequent movement of army people there and for this purpose the following trains could have been extended.

- Train No. 4708/4707 between Bandra to Bikaner, haults at Bikaner for 17 hours 45 minutes. This can be extended upto Hanumangarh.
- Train No. 4559/4560 Shiv Ganga Varanasi – New Delhi, halts at Delhi for 12 hours and 30 minutes. This can also be extended up Sriganganagar.

Lal Quila Express can also be extended upto Sriganganagar.

Provision for lakhs of rupees is made every year for the repair and white washing of staff quarters. But since last many years the aforesaid work in staff quarters is not being carried out on regular basis. The employees are being punished in the name of registering fake complaints when they complain regarding the irregularity of the work.

Catering contracts in railways can only be taken up by a contractor with an annual sale of Rs. 3 crore. This is a dream for the common man.

The rent of tea-stalls at the railway stations in different cities used to be from Rs. 70 to Rs. 150 daily which has now been increased to Rs. 300 to Rs. 1500. Due to this the passengers are unable to get good quality eatables and the workers employed at these tea stalls are also being exploited. This is the result of the previous budget. What would be the outcome of this current budget.

Porters of metropolitan cities were issued licenses by charging nearly Rs. 5,00,000 in black. Now these licences will be taken back for free once the recruitments for Gangman are made and then again money will be charged for these licences illegally.

[Shri Nihal Chand Chauhan]

1. Safety surcharge in Mail Express trains.

		Rs. Per passenger Upto 1 to 500 kms	Rs. Per passenger above 500 kms.
(1)	Second Class	2	2
(2)	Sleeper Class	10	20
(3)	Air-condition Chair Car	20	40
(4)	Air-condition III Tier	30	60
(5)	Ist Class	20	40
(6)	AC II Tier	40	80
(7)	AC Ist Class	50	100

2. The contract system is being promoted in Railways each year and the number of railway employees is being reduced. Certain rules should be framed for the workers employed with the contractors so that they are not exploited.

3. The Cleaners, Coach Attendants and other workers are merely paid Rs. 2000 to Rs. 3000 per month by the contractors whereas they themselves charge full wages from the Government. Contractors and higher officials together gulp down the hard earnings of the labourers. Regulations need to be laid down in this regard immediately.

Last year, after the Railway Budget 2006-07, the fares were increased in a hidden manner as follows: Last year 217 Mail Express trains were declared superfast trains after the Railway Budget. Neither the stoppages were decreased nor their speed was increased while the speed of a superfast trains is 100 km/hr. Superfast charge of Rs. 10/- was collected from each passenger in these trains. Thus, the Railways earned a profit worth crores of rupees with the help of this trick. An extra amount of Rs. 150 for AC Chair Car, Rs. 300 for AC II Tier and First AC was charged from every passenger on reservations availed under the 'Tatkal quota.' Moreover, these charges are not refundable. A passenger booking e-ticket through internet can cancel the ticket and take his refund through internet before the departure of the train in case he is unable to travel. But, this e-ticket is not refundable after the train has left. Most passengers are not aware of this and thus this money goes to the Railways.

1. A passenger booking e-ticket has to give number of some Identity Card. If he fails to carry this Identity Card then he is considered as travelling without ticket and is charged with penalty even though he may be carrying some other proof of identity.

2. If a passenger books a return ticket from the originating station then extra Rs. 10 is charged on the return ticket. This has also increased the earnings of the Railways.

3. Railway platform ticket cost Rs. 1 prior to the last budget. It has been increased to Rs. 3 after the budget.

4. (a) Safety surcharge in ordinary trains (New Charge has been levied)

		Rs./passenger for 1-500 kms.	Rs./passenger for above 500 kms.
(1)	Second Class	1	1
(2)	Sleeper	10	10
(3)	First Class	20	40
(4)	Second Class (Monthly Season Ticket)	10	-
(5)	First Class (MST)	20	-
(6)	Second Class (QST)	30	-
(7)	First Class (QST)	60	-

Class	Total Fair per Old Coach Rs.	Total Fair per New Coach Rs.	Total increased Fare per Coach Rs.	Total Seats in Old Coaches	Total Seats in New Coaches	Extra Seats	Percentage of the Fare decreased
AC-I	23526.00	27891.00	4365.00	18	22	04	3% and 6%
AC-II	34868.00	35656.00	788.00	46	48	02	2% and 4%
AC-III	34816.00	44064.00	9248.00	64	81	35	-
AC Chair	30170.00	43962.00	13792.00	70	102	32	-
Second Sleeper	13968.00	16968.00	2328.00	72	84	12	4%

Sriganganagar comes under NWR Railway of Bikaner Division under Jaipur Zone. AC escorting staff, who maintain the AC coaches, do not have the facility of retiring room anywhere. This facility should be provided to them. AC escorting staff of Sriganganagar is working for about 150 hours in addition to their duty hours in a month for several years but they are not being paid the overtime allowance. I had brought this to the notice of the General Manager, Jaipur in the end of the year 2006 and had also written to the Division Railway Manager, Bikaner. GM, Jaipur had issued orders to the DRM, Bikaner after which the DRM, Bikaner had implemented the duty roster and over time allowance of AC staff, Sriganganagar with immediate effect and had also sent me a copy of that order. But, overtime allowance has not been paid to the AC staff, Sriganganagar so far.

On 30.1.08, the GM, Jaipur visited Hanumangarh. During this visit I brought to the notice of the GM in his meeting in Hanumangarh that AC staff, Sriganganagar has not been paid the overtime allowance. But, no action has so far been taken in the case.

*SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN (Khurja): Sir, in this railway Budget, the hon. Minister has tried to create an illusion by announcing a large number of schemes thereby deluding the people. The hon. Minister of Railways has tried to project the Railways as a profit making organisation but from where this profit will come. Perhaps no one in the Ministry of Railways would be able to reply it. Sir, through you, I would like to tell the House that this time also, the hon. Minister has given a bouquet of schemes but like the previous budget these schemes will take a long time to realize.

I would like to cite the example of my Parliamentary Constituency Khurja for which a proposal was included in the previous budget for laying of railway line upto several kms. However, no construction work has been started there till now. It seems that the hon. Minister has some resentment against Western Uttar Pradesh due to which not a single announcement has been made in this budget for this region. For the past many years, I have been drawing the attention of hon. Railway Minister and his associate ministers towards it but my area has been neglected since his first railway budget till the recent one.

Khurja is an important railway junction which is being used by approx. two lakh passengers daily but modernization of this station has never been considered. Besides, North-East Express has not been provided a halt at Khurja station causing inconvenience to the defence personnel. In fact most of the soldiers belong to this region. Therefore, I would like that a provision should be made to provide halt to all North-East bound mail and Express trains at Khurja Station. The extent of negligence towards Khurja is evident from the fact that it has no mention in the time table *i.e.* "trains at a glance" issued by the Ministry of Railways.

Besides all the railway stations in my parliamentary constituency are in a bad shape. Attention has never been paid for the development of these stations. These stations are—Dadri where a container depot is also situated, is in a dilapidated condition besides Chola,

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ashok Pradhan]

Dankaur and Fatehpur, Makrandpur (halt) where even the major trains do not have any halt. Dadri flyover was approved long back but no progress has been made in this regard which is causing inconvenience to the exporters of Noida commercial area in moving to and few from container depot. There is a need to construct a fly-over at Dankaur and Chola railway stations also.

Sir, since long I have been demanding to connect Delhi-Kanpur railway line to the oldest district "Bulandshahar" but the hon. Minister has never paid attention to it. Connecting this line will provide a relief to the people of this area. Bulandshahar, the main district of my parliamentary constituency is the major supplier of milk in the country. Besides, the Pottary industry in Khurja is the largest in Asia and is famous world-wide. Therefore, paying more attention to this region will ultimately benefit the Railways and Government of India.

I would be thankful to the hon. Minister if he fulfils the above mentioned demands.

*SHRI SRICHAND KRIPLANI (Chittorgarh): At the outset, through you, I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways who has decided to introduce new trains for Udaipur-Indore and Delhi and also ordered to carry out survey of Badi Sadri - Mavli railway line on our request. Besides, I would also like to submit that Chittorgarh Parliamentary constituency has been facing difficulties in respect of Railways since independence. This region has a number of problems and I would like to draw your attention towards them.

Gauge conversion at Chittorgarh railway platform nos. I, II and III was completed in October, 2006 but these have not been put to use till now. By when these are likely to be started?

RRI Tower (Route Relay Interlocking System Tower) is ready for the last three-four years but NRW and WR Zone have failed to form a consensus over it. Lack of coordination between them is causing delay in completing both these works.

Ten broad gauge lines have been laid at Chittorgarh station but as per a recent order three of them would be uprooted. Though even these ten are going to be insufficient in future keeping in view the increased traffic in this area. Lack of coordination between GMNRW and GMWR, unnecessary intervention of GMNRW in the area of Chittorgarh W.R. and making a wrong policy is causing delay in the work. As Chittorgarh comes under WR and the work on Platform and Yard has been completed, orders may be issued to start the train service from there.

Survey of Neemach-Badi Sadri railway line has been completed. Therefore, please start the construction work on it to provide relief to the people.

A fresh announcement should be made to run the Udaipur–Indore Express train regularly and a stoppage be provided to it at Nimbahera. Similarly, Udaipur to Delhi Chetak Express should also run daily and it's frequency be increased.

Not a single local train has been introduced from Ajmer to Ratlam and Udaipur to Ratlam till now. A local train should be introduced for the public. The proposed goods corridor should be constructed on the nearest railway line from Delhi to Mumbai via Jaipur, Ajmer, Chittorgarh, Nimbahera, Chhoti Sadri, Pratapgarh, Banswada, Dahod and Balsad constructing a new railway line between Nimbahera and Balsad.

Broad gauge line should be laid upto Mawali by linking the rail route from Badi Sadri to Nimach.

A passenger train should be started between Chittorgarh and Indore with a departure time of 6.30 AM from Chittorgarh to make it a connecting train for lake city and Mewar Express.

All passenger trains should be given stoppages at Fatehnagar, Mawali, Bhopalsagar, Nimbaheda, Kapasan, Gangrar, Bassi, Chanderiya and Parsoli stations.

A superfast passenger train should be run from Udaipur to Jabalpur via Chittorgarh. Train No. 297 Kota-Bhind passenger train should be extended upto Chittorgarh. Train No. 9019A should be run from Udaipur to Dehradun via Haridwar so that people from Mewar/ Haroti Zone get direct train for Haridwar.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

In view of the heavy traffic at Kumbhanagar railway crossing in Chittorgarh an overbridge should be constructed there at the earliest. Presently, there is an underbridge here which is being converted into a two-way bridge. However, this bridge does not have the capacity to handle the traffic flow of the city due to which jams occur at every half hour interval. Construction of container depot at Khemli should be started at the earliest.

There is only one booking window in the computerized reservation office in Chittorgarh and only one employee has been deputed for other works such as charting, enquiry, VIP movement, attending official and other phone calls and other supervisory works which affect efficiency and create problems for passengers. Senior citizens, media persons, handicapped persons, VIPs etc. also have to go to the said window. Hence, staff should be deployed to deal with the work of supervision, charting, inquiry etc. in Chittorgarh Reservation Office. Window number 1 which remains closed at present should also be made functional by deploying a person to man the said window. When said arrangements are made would it be possible to raise the number of footfalls at Chittorgarh Reservation Office.

Trains No. 2996/2995 should be given a halt at Nimbaheda because it is a large industrial area and many cement plants are being constructed here. A popular pilgrimage, Sawariyaji, which is visited by lakhs of believers is also situated here. Hence, all trains need to be halted here.

Gauge conversion at Chittorgarh has not been completed so far because of which trains have been running late. Hence platforms one, two and three at Chittorgarh station should be made operational at the earliest. All the platforms at Chittorgarh station should be covered fully with tin-sheds and all facilities of a model station be made available there. A local train from Udaipur to Ratlam/Indore should be started to make the journey to Jyotirling Mahakaal and Omkareshwar easy for the passengers.

DMU rakes which were run on metre gauge earlier should be run between Chittorgarh and Amjer and Chittorgarh and Ratlam on broad gauge as well.

Train No. 2991/2992 should have halt at Kapasan station and reservation system at the station should be computerized.

A local train should be run between Udaipur and Ajmer. A train should be run between Udaipur and Jaipur via Bhilwara-Ajmer to coincide with the timings of Chetak Express and Meenakshi Express. Level of Kapasan railway station platform should be raised.

Train No. 2996/2995 Ajmer-Udaipur-Mumbai-Bandra superfast should be run regularly. The reservation quota of this train at Chittorgarh station should be adjusted so as to fulfil the requirement of entire Mewar region. Reservation quota of this train has been fixed from Ajmer/Udaipur station under the computerized reservation system. Hence, 80 percent of the reservation quota is utilized by the people belonging to Ajmer/Udaipur and people from Chittorgarh/Nimach are not able to get confirmed reservation. Waitlist goes upto 100 for second class, 25 for III AC and 10 for II AC. This forces the people to make use of other means of transportation due to which railways have to bear loss of revenue. Similarly, reservation quota for train No. 2316 (Udaipur-Sealdah-Ananya Express) should also be provided from Chittorgarh station.

VIP quota (emergency) for all classes of coaches in train number 2996 (Ajmer/Udaipur-Bandra Terminus Mumbai), 9654 (Ajmer-Ratlam Express), 9656 (Ajmer-Ratlam Express) and 2316 (Udaipur-Sealdah Ananya Express) should be made available at Chittorgarh station so that reservation may be made easily available for VIPs and VVIPs of the area.

Chittorgarh CTI staff under the Ratlam Division have not been given charge of any train after completion of gauge conversion. The trains are being attended to by staff posted at Ajmer, Udaipur, Kota and Ratlam. This is not only unfair to the Chittorgarh-Nimach ticket checking staff but is also causing revenue loss for the railways. Hence, charge of all trains running from Ajmer to Ratlam and Vododara and from Udaipur to Kota should be entrusted to Chittorgarh checking staff.

Since Chittorgarh is touched by almost all trains passing through Ratlam, Ajmer, Udaipur, Kota, Jaipur, Indore etc., a diesel shed is needed there. The entire staff employed at the metre gauge tracks in Chittorgarh is sitting idle. Hence, a diesel shed should be set up at the broad gauge station and the staff should be absorbed there. 'A' category ART/ARME (with crane) should be made available at Chittorgarh station so that it is instantly available if any accident occurs.

[Shri Srichand Kriplani]

Running staff (Driver-Guard) at Chittorgarh station should be given charge of trains running between Ajmer and Ratlam and between Chittorgarh and Kota as per the earlier practice. Ajmer-Udaipur-Bandra Train No. 2996/ 2995 should be named 'Shaurya Nagri Chittorgarh Superfast".

A passenger entrance should be constructed at the eastern side of Chittorgarh station to provide direct access to Maharana Pratap Setu Marg to facilitate movement from the old city.

Two DMU rakes should be run between Chittorgarh and Ratlam twice a day so as to provide cheaper and faster transportation to the poor people of this area. Two DMU rakes should be made available between Chittorgarh and Kota twice a day so as to provide cheaper and faster transportation of goods to the public of this area.

The electrification and doubling of Kota-Chittorgarh section should be carried out so that the trains could ply at maximum speed. A sum of Rs. 726 crores has been allocated in the present budget for a new route Ramganj Mandi – Bhopal which should be completed expeditiously. But only 30 crore rupees have been sanctioned in this budget which would be a drop in the ocean.

Dharnavan level crossing should be opened and a guard should be provided there or an overbridge at that point should be constructed so as to ensure smooth traffic. A railway over bridge should be constructed on Ramganj Mandi – Khairabad road for which the State Government has given its consent and sanctioned its share of amount. An over bridge should be constructed at Modak railway line.

Besides upgradation of Dhakania railway station an enquiry office should be set up and tin-shed should be constructed there. A computerized reservation counter should be set up at Rawatbhata. The culvert below the Rangpur overbridge should be opened. Jaipur – Shyamgarh (193) train should be extended upto Ratlam.

The stoppage of Udaipur-Maisoor and Jammu-Tavi trains should be provided at Ramganj Mandi. The height of platform at Ramganj should be raised. A tin-shed should be provided at platform No. 2 at Ramganj Mandi. A night train should be introduced from Kota to Nagda.

The existing foot overbridge for going from platform No. 1 to 5 at Chittorgarh railway station is very far from the main entrance due to which it takes much time to go to various platforms and the passengers have to face a lot of hardships. Hence another existing bridge for going from platform No. 1 to Railway colony should be connected with all the platforms so that the passengers may get an additional bridge close to the main entrance.

Reservation quota in all the Chittorgarh bound passenger trains should be fixed for Kapasan and Fatehnagar stations.

The stoppage of Intercity (2991), Lake city (2965), Udaipur – Bandra (2995) etc. is required at Kapasan railway station.

Hence, I hope that you will consider the aforesaid problems sympathetically. I have heard that the hon. Railway Minister is kind-hearted and always ready to address the problems of public. I believe that hon. Railway Minister will address the said problems very soon. He had also promised to address all the problems of my area during his visit to that area.

*SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY (Maharajganj, U.P.): Sir, I rise to oppose the railway budget 2008-09 presented by the hon. Railway Minister reasonably. Though the Railway Minister has tried to present a populist budget but after going through this budget I find that it is far from the reality because he had tried the same thing in his previous budget also. As the hon. Minister had given indications to reduce the freight in the preceding year 2007-08. But in fact instead of reducing it, the freight of some objects was increased by 2 to 7 per cent. Similarly a surcharge of 7 percent was levied on clinker, the raw material for cement and iron through a circular in January. Consequently the freight charge of cement was increased from Rs. 810/- per tonne to Rs. 868/- per tonne. Similarly the railways levied two percent development charges on transportation of luggage and parcel. You have increased the Tatkal charges also. 150 rupees and 300 rupees are being charged respectively for sleeper class and AC class. You have upgraded about 200 Express and mail trains as superfast trains whereas there has been no change in their stoppage, these trains are often late also and the charges have also been increased.

Sir, hon. Railway Minister talks of providing world class modern stations and trains in the country. But there

*Speech was laid on the Table.

are still many parts in the country where there is no rail network. The existing platforms are very old but he does not pay attention to these even after his attention is drawn to these things. For example, Maharajganj has been a district for almost 20 years. But there is no rail network in Maharajganj. On 2.5.2005 I had drawn the hon. Minister's attention under Rule 377 towards this fact that if a new railway line is laid between Anand Nagar and Ghughli via Maharajganj, it will benefit the public and traders of my constituency. But the Minister tried to dispose of the matter citing shortage of funds and other reasons.

In this context under rule 377 on 5.12.2007 I had drawn the attention of hon. Minister towards laying a new rail line between Siswa or Ghughli and Anand Nagar via Maharajganj which is likely to reduce the travelling distance for the trains on that route by 50 kilometres and save fuel and time as well and the rush of trains at Gorakhpur station will also be decreased. The letter sent to me by the hon. Minister of Railways was about the progress of Bihar and the funds allocated for this purpose whereas I had drawn his attention under Rule 377 towards laying of new railway line in Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh. However, the letter does not have any mention of Maharajganj district of Uttar Pradesh.

This time the hon. Minister had proposed inviting international open bids for developing New Delhi station, Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal Mumbai, Patna and Sikandrabad Stations to the international level. I am sorry to say that not even a single railway station in northern India has been considered fit for this purpose even though Uttar Pradesh is an important State of the country.

Similarly, the hon. Minister has also proposed 13 new programmes worth Rs. 101 crore for making improvement in health services. It includes air-conditioning of the Central Hospital, Northern Railway, upgradation of divisional hospital into central hospitals at Jaipur and Hubali of North-Western and South-Western railways, setting up of divisional hospital in Ranchi and construction of OPD block in the ICF. But Uttar Pradesh and north-eastern railways have been ignored once again. The Minister has started a scheme of Kullahars (earthen pots) but it is not being implemented at most of the stations. People are still using plastic glasses causing pollution.

Sir, many a times I have drawn the attention of the hon. Minister towards the age-old platforms of Siswa, Ghugali, Notanva and Anand Nagar. There is a need to raise their level and length. However, when the hon. Minister does not take seriously the questions raised in the House, how action can be expected on such letters.

The Minister is talking about increasing the income through freight but in the absence of godowns at the stations, how traders will avail this facility. I have requested the hon. Minister in writing to set up a godown at Ghugali, Sisva and Anand Nagar stations near Maharajganj. However, no action has been taken in this regard.

The hon. Minister has made a commitment last year regarding use of Khadi in trains and to provide AC coaches for transportation of milk and vegetables but the commitment has not been fulfilled.

For the last many years, the hon. Minister is announcing to convert unmanned railway level crossings into manned one but this work has also not been completed.

The hon. Minister might be observing that the people are still facing the problems of potable water, cleanliness and sanitation in toilets at platforms but no improvement is being made.

The hon. Minister is aware of inadequate safety arrangements in Railways. Often male passengers board the coaches reserved for women and misbehave with them but the police remains silent spectator.

In the last budget, the hon. Minister had announced to provide toilets similar to that of aircraft in all the trains but not even a single train has been provided this facility till now.

Sir, the hon. Minister has given a good news to the House that Railways has earned a profit of Rupees 68 thousand, 788 crores during the last four years. I would like to request the hon. Minister to include my demands in the budget for the year 2008-2009 and allocate adequate funds to meet these demands.

1. I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that by laying a broad gauge line from my parliamentary constituency Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh to Anand Nagar via Lucknow will reduce the distance to be covered by the trains coming from Bagha and Motihari areas of Bihar to Lucknow by 80 kms. as these trains will not

[Shri Pankaj Choudhary]

have to go via Gorakhpur. It will reduce the railway traffic at Gorakhpur station and will save the fuel and time also besides facilitating the common people, farmers and traders of Maharajganj. I am demanding it for the past many years.

2. Sisva, Notanva, Ghugali and Anand Nagar stations near my parliamentary constituency Maharajganj are age old stations. The level and length of these stations should be increased to facilitate the people of the area especially the old age people, disabled and women to board and deboard the trains.

3. A godown equipped with modern facilities should be constructed at Ghugali station near my parliamentary constituency Maharajganj. Huge quantity of foodgrains is produced in this region and approx. 500 big and small rice mills are also located here. Foodgrain is sent to other parts of the country from here. Therefore, the capacity of godowns at Sisva, Notanva and Anand Nagar stations should be increased so that problems may not be faced in sending the large quantities of foodgrain produced in this region to other parts of the country.

4. The hon. Minister has selected the New Delhi, Chhattrapati Shivaji Terminus, Mumbai, Patna and Sikandrabad stations to develop them to the international level. I demand that any station of Uttar Pradesh may also be added in this Scheme. And I would be happy if Gorakhpur, the headquarters of North-eastern railways is also included in this scheme.

5. The hon. Minister has proposed 13 new programmes worth Rs. 101 crores for making improvement in health services. I would be happy if a hospital equipped with all the modern facilities is opened at north-eastern railway's headquarters, Gorakhpur.

6. Hon. Minister is requested to establish a factory near Gorakhpur to provide employment opportunities to poor youths and backward people. Hon. Minister, if wishes he can give priority in providing employment to the wards of railway employees.

7. I request the hon. Minister to start up and down train service at Gorakhpur-Notanva section to facilitate the local people.

8. Hon. Minister is requested to provide concessions in the railway fare to the unemployed graduate and post graduate boys and girls.

9. Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards the fact that though he is claiming major improvement in railway, most of the trains run late due to which passengers have to wait for hours together. Train accidents are taking place frequently and a number of people are losing their lives or limbs. My demand is that a special scheme should be included in this regard in the present budget.

10. Saptakranti Express running between Muzzafarpur and Delhi via Narkatiyaganj, Sisva and Gorakhpur should be provided a halt at Sisva bazaar.

With this, I conclude my speech.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH (Udhampur): Sir, with your permission I rise to support this Budget. I can say this with a challenge that you are a great personality of the country and all the budgets presented by you so far have set new records and you certainly deserve praise for that. No Member has criticized you for the Budget. I would like to thank hon. Laluji and all his colleagues who are working for the welfare of the poor and I would also like to say that the way you have set an example by presenting a good budget may you live long and may you keep serving the nation!

Many people are aggrieved by your personality without any reason and they have a habit of finding faults in you. I would like to say that in my State, particularly in the hilly region, no such caste or special category remains which has not been provided any relief by you. You have thought about every person. You have thought for all be it scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and hilly people. It is a kind of record the way you have honoured the patriots. Earlier no one bothered about army people. You have provided facilities and given respect to them. The iron prices today are being watched by the entire world. Therefore, I can say that you are working as a star in the UPA Government. It is my humble submission that you must not be scared by anything. Although we

are your supporters but you are actually a very good human being from every aspect. You are a person who is connected to the soil, poor and common people, patriots and coolies alike. It is difficult to find such good people in today's world. As beacon light you are lighting the country, therefore, I do not have to say anything else other than supporting you.

You have doubled the railway line from Jalandhar to Jammu in my State. It is my humble submission to you that it would be very good if doubling of the railway line from Jalandhar to Udhampur is also carried out. People visiting Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine will be greatly benefited by it. The work on rail project towards Vaishno Devi lagging behind due to any reasons may kindly be expedited so that the passengers visiting from far flung areas of the country could also be benefited by it.

In the first budget four trains were introduced by you to Udhampur, but now they are very crowded because that is the last station of Jammu-Kashmir State. Therefore, all the trains must be extended upto that place for the benefit of people of the State.

You are going to run a Shatabdi train upto Pathankot. This Shatabdi train may be extended upto Jammu so that all the passengers can be benefited from this. You have decided to run Rajdhani Express on all days of a week. I would like to submit that if this is extended upto Udhampur then it would indeed be a very good step and I am hopeful that it shall be done.

Earlier a train used to run from Jammu to Haridwar at 11 O'clock, the timing of which has now been changed to 6 O'clock and now all the passengers reach Haridwar by 6 O'clock.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, all the people are very happy. Their time is saved and they return very happily. I would like to thank you for chalking out such a time table. Last time a survey was sanctioned for our place, and this time survey in Rajouri area has been sanctioned for which I would like to thank you. Work has not yet been started in regard to the sanctioned surveys. I would like to urge you to kindly take up the survey work there so that people's faith in you could be strengthened further. The survey from Kathua to Kishtwadi via Bani, Basauli and Bhadrawah is sanctioned. I would like to request you to kindly pay attention towards this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude your speech.

CHAUDHARY LAL SINGH: Sir, I am going to conclude my speech. I would like to thank you for introducing 'Garib Rath'. Every single child of Jammu-Kashmir is very happy that you have introduced a Garib Rath from Jammu to Dehradun. I would like to request you to kindly extend it a little bit if possible. This Garib Rath should be started from Udhampur.

Sir, if you remember you had announced that a sleeper factory would be set up in Udhampur. Hon. Prime Minister was also present there, you had announced that factory for Kathua. Will you kindly find out the reason as to why the work on the said factory is not progressing further.

Sir, I am really thankful to you and would like to wish you all the strength so that you may continue working with the same determination. You are an example to this nation.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Mr. Chairman, Sir, 80 hon. Members want to participate in this discussion. It can get very late in the night. It would be good if some of the hon. Members lay their speech on the Table of the House and there is no harm even if they do not do so. We have made arrangements of food for the staff.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dinner will begin at 9 O'clock. I have also requested the hon. Members to lay their speeches on the Table of the House.

[English]

*SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA (Davangere): Hon'ble Sir, the Railway Budget, which is presented by the Hon'ble Railway Minister for the year 2008-09, is not a development oriented and it is an unfortunate and disappointing Budget as far as Karnataka is concerned. Karnataka has been totally neglected in this Budget. Only 2-3 projects have been announced but they are more advantageous to Tamil Nadu than Karnataka. Number of very important Railway Projects of my constituency have been ignored for the last several years. Those projects have not even been mentioned in this Railway Budget. They are :-

(i) Railway line between Tumkur-Chitradurga-Davangere: It is 70 Km. Railway line. It passes through Birur, Kadur and Arasikere. It will take

*English translation of the speech originally laid on the Table in Kannada.

[Shri G.M. Siddeswara]

more than one hour to travel in this route. It causes unnecessary expenditure, waste of time, energy and it will lead to more congetion of traffic. Considering all these genuine facts we have been demanding a railway line between Tumkar-Hiriyur-Chitradurga for several years. I have submitted so many representations and I have met personally the Hon'ble Minister and impress upon him to take necessary steps for timely completion of these railway projects. The Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasadji had assured us, during his participation in the conference of Yadava Samaj at Chitradurga, on 11.02.2008 that he would sanction survey work of this railway line. But he made us disappointed by allocating a meagre sum of Rs. 3.80 lakhs.

Kottur-harihar Railway Line: Work of this Kottur-Harihar Railway Line is going on at a snail's space. It was expected to complete this project with a cost of Rs. 125 crores but due to unnecessary delay in implementing the project its cost has gone up to Rs. 200 crores. Inspite of our demand for completion of this railway line by the year 2008, only a meagre sum of Rs. 30 crore has been allocated in this Budget. It has made people of this part of Karnataka greatly disappointed.

(ii) Chitradurga-Jagalur-Kottur Railway Line: This is a promising/encouraging railway line of this area and if it is completed the entire picture of this part of Karnataka would be changed. Though this railway line had been announced two years back only Rs. 10 lakhs have been earmarked in the year 2006-07 Railway Budget and in the present Budget also a mere Rs. 10 lakhs have been allocated. It is unreasonable. This allocation is not sufficient to complete even the survey work of this railway line, that too are made in a phased manner.

(iii) Road Over Bridge (ROB): To construct ROB for Railway crossing near Harihar and Davangere at NH 207 and NH 208, in the year 2004, the then Railway Minister laid the foundation stone. The funds have been released in the year 2005 but no work has been started so far. It has not even been mentioned in the present Budget. Similarly, we have been demanding for the construction of RUB at the middle of the Davangere city near the railway crossing 199, but it is unfortunate that it has not been mentioned in the present Budget.

(iv) Modernisation of Railway Stations at Davangere: Davangere is one of the lucrative progressive districts in respect of education, industry, other economic activities. Every day a good number of inter-state people and foreigners are visiting this important place. Railway is the only mode of transportation, which can further boost the development of this region. Therefore, it is very much essential to take steps to modernisaton the railway station at Davangere.

Apart from all these I had submitted number of representations in order to provide facilities to the people of this part of Karnataka.

In addition to all these I have submitted a number of representations to the Hon'ble Railway Minister to provide railway facilities to the people of this part of Karnataka. Those are:—

(a) To give a stoppage at CHIKKAJAJUR for both the RANI CHENNAMMA EXPRESS and KURLA EXPRESS.

(b) To give stoppage at HOLALKERE for MEERAJ-BANGALORE MAIL.

(c) A.C. Coach should be added to the MAIL train, which starts from DAVANAGERE at 10 PM.

(d) To provide basic amenities to the passengers at the Railway Stations of CHIKKAJAJUR and ARABAGATTI.

(e) One more inter-city train should be introduced from DAVANAGERE to BANGALORE along with existing trains.

(f) A Foot Over Bridge should be constructed at AMRITAPUR RAILWAY STATION.

(g) Survey work should be done for extension of the KOTTUR-HARIHAR Railway line upto SHIMOGA.

(h) Extension of the RAYDURGA-CHITRADURGA upto CHIKKAJAJUR.

People of Karnataka were being neglected while recruiting 4,700 group 'D' employees in South-West

Railway zone. Non-kannada people were given priority. Already in all the Railway Stations and Railway offices of Karnataka a large number of non-kannada people have been appointed. They are unable to respond to the problems of people Karnataka as they don't know Kannada language.

It is a matter of serious concern and not excusable that non-kannada people are not given priority while recruiting 4700 group 'D' employees. It is not only in the recruitment but also in awarding railway projects. Hon'ble Railway Minister has shown step-motherly attitude towards Karnataka.

Even though, I have made number of submissions to the Hon'ble Railway Minister in person and in writing. I have received nothing but the acknowledgement.

Therefore, through you I would earnestly request the Hon'ble Railway Ministers that they should keep the entire nation in mind instead of giving priority to their own States while awarding railway projects. They must do justice to every State. Finally I would like to impress upon the Hon'ble Railway Minister that in the Supplementary Railway Budget top priority should be given to my constituency Davanagere.

[Translation]

SHRI TUFANI SAROJ (Saidpur): Sir, I welcome the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways. In fact, the Minister has presented a shining India Rail Budget. I want to draw attention of the hon. Minister of Railways to Janghai railway station under Lucknow division of northern railway. Janghai station has got the states of a junction. Many a trains pass through this junction, but in the absence of a stoppage here, the people of this area have to travel 100 kms to board the required train. Intercity 4204/4203 Up-Dn, Ratnagiri Superfast 2165, 2166 Up-Dn and Punjab Mail 3005, 3006 Up-Dn, which run on this route. In the absence of stoppage of these trains at Janghai, the people of the area around it face a lot of difficulties and the people have been demanding for the stoppage of these trains for long. I would urge the hon. Minister to arrange stoppage of these trains at Janghai. There is no waiting room there. There are 2-3 railway crossings and trains arrive here from three directions. Though it is a junction, yet there is no waiting room. Therefore, there is a need to make a waiting room. 3237 Patna-Mathura Express stops at Shahganj railway station in Jaunpur district, whereas, it does not stop at Jaunpur, a district headquarters. The said train stops at other stations in the district. Mathura is the land of Jai Gurudev. District Jaunpur has large number of followers of Jai Gurudev and the devotees come here round the year but there is no stoppage in Jaunpur. Last year also I had made a request in this regard, but no action was taken thereon. Now, I am sure that the hon. Minister would provide the stoppage of the said train at district headquarters, Jaunpur.

Auriyar-Jaunpur line, under North-Eastern Railway is being converted into broad gauge from metre gauge. When it was metre gauge, Kerakat used to be a full-fledged station. There were railway crossings, godowns and other facilities there. But, since the start of gauge conversion process the station has been converted into a halt. There are two-three industries in its proximity and there is only a tehsil headquarters between Auriyar-Jaunpur. I wrote to the GM and also to the hon. Minister, though I have got a reply, yet I do not know for what reasons Kerakat would remain a halt only. In view of the interest of businessmen, I urge the hon. Minister to restore the status of full fledged station to it.

Mumbaites have many problems. People start rushing at the last moment. The situation is such that if we required a ticket for 10th, within 15 minutes all tickets for that date get sold. There is a shortage of trains. My submission is that a fully air conditioned superfast train be introduced between Banaras-Mumbai. It will solve the problems of people of Poorvanchal, eastern U.P. and Bihar living in Mumbai.

My last point is that the security personnels who accompany us, keep standing throughout the night,, seats should be arranged for them in II AC class. I think it is last Railway Budget of 14th Lok Sabha.

[English]

*SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI (Dharwad North): I rise to speak few words on Rail Budget 2008-09. Looking at the budget holistically there is nothing new. It is just like a old wine in new bottle. The Railway Minister has boasted of record profits for 2007-08 that is 25,000 crores. It is clear if we look at the 4 budgets presented by Laluji, the common thread seen is a tendency to make Indian Railways a commercial unit rather than an important vehicle of Socio-Economical revolution of the country!

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Pralhad Joshi]

In the last budget that is 2007-08 Laluji, had hit the headlines by not only not increasing the fares but had scaled down fares in AC Class said to have done for competing with Airways. This time he has gone a step ahead by cutting the existing fares for both AC and Sleeper Class.

The workability of these cuts is a different matter and there is much talk already how these cuts are just eyewash and people are just being fooled.

The point I would like to score here is how this Government is shying away from the real issues and problems the Indian Railways facing.

Now it is everybody's conviction that the real building of the nation is much depended on building of infrastructures of all kinds. Even our Finance Minister agrees this point, which is to some extent reflected in his General Budget.

I will take the example of the allocation pattern of S.W.R., which covers major portion of Karnataka which I am mainly concerned. The total capital allocation for all activities is about Rs. 1850 crores, of this 1850 crores the capital earmarked for real infrastructure building, projects like construction of new lines, guage conversions and doubling of the tracks is just Rs. 466 crores! That is not even 25% of the total capital investment of Railways for S.W.R.

Injustice to Karnataka: Here I must not fail to mention that always a traditional way of injustice is meted out to my State in providing new Rail infrastructure to the State. The gauge conversion works started decades ago are not still completed. No money is given to doubling of the tracks and nor is there any talk of much money flowing to new lines projects leave away announcing new lines projects.

A total of Rs. 121 crores is provided for all ongoing new lines projects.

1. Harihar-Kottur, Newlines works.	Rs. 30 crores.
2. Kadur-Chikmagalure.	Rs. 10 crores.
3. Hasan-Shravanbelagola	Rs. 55 crores.
4. Hubli-Ankola	Rs. 10 crores.
5. Bangalore-Sattyamangal	Rs. 01 crores.
6. Raydurga-Tumkur	Rs. 15 crores.

Gauge Conversion:

1. Shivamogga-Talaguppa No Fund	Rs. 40 crores.
2. Arasikeri-Mangalore	Rs. 137 crores.
3. Kolar-Chikkaballapur	Rs. 110 crores.
Doubling Projects:	Rs. 208 crores.

No new infrastructure: Laluji quite fervently boasted 2007-08 year of historic high revenues for Railways of Rs. 25,000 crores well it is really inspiring. There is nothing magical in it when our economy is growing at the rate of 9% naturally it has the commercial impact on transport sector for high earnings and Railway being a biggest freight carrier in the country grabs the sizable market share. Admittedly the passenger traffic has gone up by 5.6% in the current year and naturally there is 14.2% hike in passenger traffic revenue. But, here the point to be noted is that this surplus is achieved on the existing infrastructure and there is nothing to be felt proud about the corresponding growth of new infrastructure on which this growth is achieved.

In the past four years Railways transported an additional 233 million tonnes and it proposes to increase it to 310 mt. in the next 4 years. How it is going to be achieved is not clear. There is no clear road map in the Budget. The issue of a clear road map is important due to a variety of reasons. If the economy grows at an estimated rate of nine percent, the Railways freight throughout should grow at least by 13-14 percent, if not more. This is the historical correlation. However, the freight traffic growth of the Railways has been steadily dwindling. For the past few years, the Railways has been transporting on an average an additional 60 mt. every year.

Though there is a proposal to aquire about 20,000 of wagons in 2008-09 again there is no clear picture proposed how it will be achieved. Much is said about acquisition of high capacity wagons but doubts are always raised high about the implementation.

The Minister propose to upgrade infrastructure at the cost of 75,000 crores in next 7 years. But wherefrom the money comes?

Public Private Partnership (PPP): Amidst the largesse that Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav today doled out in his last rail budget, was a strong intent to

get the private sector on board the railway turnaround story. The minister said that of the Rs. 2.5 lakh crore of rail investments planned over the next five years, at least Rs. 1 lakh crore would have to come in through the public private partnership (PPP) route-this, even as PPP projects announced earlier are yet to take off in any significant way.

The railway minister proposed a number of schemes where private participation could come in, such as projects for provision of would class facilities at metro stations, setting up of state of the art rolling stock production units and construction of multi modal logistics parks.

However, PPP schemes introduced in the railway budget over the last couple of years are yet to see the light of day. "A couple of years back, the Railways announced the establishment of a diesel locomotive manufacturing unit at Marora, an electric locomotive unit at Madhepura, a rail coach factory at Chhapra and another one in Rae Bareilly"

So, in the nutsel what it indicates is that even with such a growth story in general economy Railway Minister has failed utterly to visualize a constructive programme for development of Rail infrastructure still Railway wants to show the profit magic by optimum utilization of existing infrastructure. That is why the Minister is not much liberal in going for projects like new lines, doubling of the tracks, gauge conversion etc.

Not honoring the Karnataka Demands: This is further reflected in rejection of some good proposals from SWR with regard to establishing a new wagon overhauling workshop, new DMU(Diesel Multiple Unitshed) at the cost of Rs. 311 Crores and 13 Crores respectively in Hubli.

No timebound scheme for all ongoing projects in Karnataka: For all the ongoing, new line, gauge conversion and track doubling projects a routine allocation is made.

Hubli-Ankola: There is no resolve reflected in the Budget regarding this new line project and people are again let down.

New Trains: Out of the 53 new trains introduced 21 are for Bihar. Some repeated demands for new Bangalore and Mumbai trains from Hubli is again discarded. I urge the Rail Minister to do justice to these demands Golgumaz Express to be re-introduced.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (Kasargod): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I welcome the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister Laluji for the year 2008-09.

Railways have become a profit making undertaking and there is no hike in the passenger and the parcel charges. The credit goes to the Railway Minister and his colleagues and also to the 14 lakh workers who have been working day and night for the grand success of this public undertaking.

The railways are the most important infrastructure for the development of any State or any region. The Government of Kerala and the MPs of Kerala have given a number of suggestions. I am glad to congratulate the Government that the coach factory for Kerala and some of the other items have been sanctioned. We are really thankful for that. At the same time, still Kerala is facing some of the major issues with regard to passenger service which the Government has to take a serious note of. Especially in the northern part of Kerala, the passenger service is really insufficient. It is true that from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. there is no train at all between Calicut and Mangalore. There is a gap of six hours between these two major stations. There is a demand and request from the Government of Kerala to start an inter-city express from Calicut to Mangalore. It would be very beneficial not only to Kerala but to Karnataka also.

Our Railway Minister Laluji, when he visited Kerala, publicly announced to introduce a passenger train from Cannanur to Mangalore to minimize the passenger traffic. There is no difficulty because there is a train that starts from Calicut and it stops at Cannanur. It remains at least eight or nine hours idle there.

That train can be extended to Mangalore so that this problem can really be solved.

Sir, Kerala is a tourist destination. A number of tourists from other States are coming to Kerala everyday but at the same time there is no link train from other States. So, a tourist train from Kanyakumari to Goa is required not only for Kerala but also for other three States – Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Goa. These four States can be covered. So, this demand for a link train can be acceded to by the Government.

Sir, a large number of people from northern Kerala go to Bangalore. There is only one train, that is, Kannur-Eswandapuri Express. It is only running twice a week.

[Shri P. Karunakaran]

That train has to be made a daily train because there is no other train in this belt from the northern part of the State.

Sir, the survey work in respect of Tallichery-Mysore, Nilamboor-Nanjancode, Guruvayur-Tanoor, Angamali-Sabari is going on very slowly. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to allot sufficient funds for this work, and there should be a time-bound programme to complete the survey work.

I would like to congratulate the Government for having including two surveys, that is, Angadippuram-Calicut and Kanhangad-Panathur-Kaniyur, in this Budget. The survey work in respect of these has to be speeded up.

There is a heritage centre, Subramaniyam. On the one side, there is the tourist destination and on the other side, there is the pilgrim destination. If we go to Cannanore, it comes to about 800 kilometres and if we go to Mangalore, it comes to about 450 kilometres. So, if this line comes, the distance to reach Bangaluru can be reduced by at least 150 kilometres. So, this would be a feasible line. There is no forest at all. People are ready to give their land without any difficulty.

There are about 65 ROBs in Kerala, and the work in respect of 12 ROBs is completed. The work in respect of the remaining ROBs is in different stages. I would request the Government to take up this issue. A time-bound programme has to be drawn up for these ROBs.

Sir, a good number of railway stations in Kerala have no better buildings, lack of shelters and lack of better platforms. These are all the common features in the State of Kerala. In this Budget, there may be some provisions but the Government has to take a special care with regard to the miserable situation which the passengers are facing.

We appreciate the decision to give relief to the licensed porters but at the same time nothing is said about the catering workers. So, that issue also has to be taken up.

I am glad that the Garib Rath from Kochuveli to Lokamanya Tilak has been introduced. It was declared in the last Rail Budget. I would request to provide stoppage of this train in the district headquarters. There are only two districts which are excluded. A large number of passengers' travel to Mumbai is from the northern part, that is, from Kasargod. Likewise, this train goes to Kayamkulam, Alleppy district. So, these two district headquarters – Kasargod and Kayamkulam – have to be included in the list of new stoppages.

Sir, we have been pointing out that the passenger traffic in Kerala is very high. It is really difficult for people especially common people, office going people and students to board the train. So, our demand is that in order to minimize the heavy traffic, this mainline electric unit can be considered especially in the electrified unit.

Sir, I conclude my speech with one more request. In almost all the long distance trains, the difficulty is that women passengers are not able to get seats or berths though we have given some facilities.

So, it should be made mandatory that at least two coaches are selected exclusively for women passengers.

With these few words, I once again support this Budget.

*SHRI RAVICHANDRAN SIPPIPARAI (Sivakasi): On behalf of M.D.M.K and our leader VAIKO I would like to put some suggestions on the Railway Budget 2007-08.

Railway is one among the fastest growing public sector. In many aspects it should not reflect the common-man requirement. Many of the express trains are converted as a Super Fast Trains without adding any new facilities. The only thing is indifferently Railways are increasing the fares.

One more point is regarding reduction of general compartments. Now a days many of the labourers, construction workers, semi-skilled workers and common people are using train facilities. So the crowd in general compartment is increased and increasing demand for the general compartment. Contrast to this Railway has decreased general compartments in many trains.

Announcing projects and new Railway lines every year after year is a Routine one. But the works in reality move very slowly. Even in some cases nothing is moved. For example in my constituency Virudthunagar-Manamadurai Broad Gauge conversion is taken by the year 2006-07 that same year some token money earmarked, the next year 2007-08 around 25 crores has been allocated for the same project. Entire 11 months

* Speech was laid on the Table.

between April 2007 to till March 9' nothing is happen. This year Railway Budget again 60 crores has been allotted. I don't know for how many years going like this. I urge through you to expedite this Virudthunagar-Manamadurai Gauge Conversion works which is pending for a very long time.

Providing stoppage of Nellai Express (Train No.2632) at Sattur Station in both directions in Southern Railway.

The Railway level crossing in Sivakasi will be required for FOB. (between Sivakasi-Srivilputtur Station).

Nellai-Kanyakumari are the two districts which was earlier part of Madurai division. 1980-9- it was shifted to Thiruvanathapuram division. That time it was told that after the Gauge Conversion work between Thirunelveli and Manamadurai completed, the area given back to original Madurai division. All works had been completed. Even after the Gauge Conversion work between Thirunelvelli and Madurai the Railway line still with Thiruvanathapuram divison. So I immediately urge the Railway Minister to shift the area to original Madurai Division.

The Railway line between Madurai-Tutucorin-Kanyakumari must be doubled and electrified.

Gauge conversion work between Chenkottai and Punalur must be completed as earliest.

The Railway Employees launched long and intensive strike in 1974 for bonus fts a major demand. It laid the foundation for a historic turning point in the political "power at the centre. Railwaymen were the first among the Central Government employees in arriving at an agreement for Productivity linked bonus. In spite of so many constraint the Railways are making Profits is mainly because of the since efforts and hard work of the Railwaymen. So Railwaymen should be paid incentive bonus besides productivity linked bonus whenever Railways earn profit extra earnings without surrendering it to the general budget be spend the extra earnings in the welfare of Rairlwaymen. Housing is the major problem now. Railway could acquire land and allot plots to every Railwaymen at a subsidized rate.

SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN (Baramulla): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to bring forth a few points, which are pertinent to famous national project — broad gauge railway project — in Jammu and Kashmir. This project is world famous because this connects Valley with the rest of the country.

Sir, I remember the saying of one stalwart freedom fighter. Six decades earlier when he was delivering a lecture in the Constituent Assembly of Kashmir, he said: "Only miracle can work and the road from Jammu to Srinagar will be stabilized, no question of a railway line to Kashmir Valley." So, my thanks go to the organizations, which are working on this project with dedicated sense of purpose and taking a lot of trouble during the security pressures and other difficulties to get it through.

But I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister about a few points, which are to be taken immediately into consideration so that this famous project does not face any bad omen. I would like to invite his attention towards the unwarranted and undesired thinking of grade change in the railway track and the design from Loaly (Riyasi) to Banihal. There is a rumour, they speak about it, that in the corridors of Northern Railway bureaucracy, now, this idea is getting a favour that they must invite some experts from outside, who can help them to change the design from 1:100 grade to a steeper grade of 1:50. There are certain instances all over the world that 1:50 grade can work in some areas that shorten the length of the railway track. But that is not feasible in Kashmir area because that may shorten the length of the track, but it would enhance and increase the length of tunnels, which are there in that area, where we have a tricky geology; and there is no certainty about the rock, which is not a strong rock there.

So, we need not to incur the risks in this important project. My humble request to the officers and the experts of the Department would be that they should not think of any design change. If there is a design change, we will take it as a conspiracy against this big and famous project. Now, the work has been held up in that area. We have three portions of this important track. From Jammu to Katra, it was expected to go through this year but unfortunately it got delayed because of squeeze in one of the tunnels, is a bigger worry now. I have been told reportedly that some of the experts from outside are now giving a suggestion in that regard. So, that worries us. The area, which was to be opened in 2007, would get delayed, at least, by one year. In case of Loaly to Banihal area, if you think of a design change, that would need one year for survey and two years for putting the geological studies in this situation. When the area experts would start studying about that area, it would take not

[Shri Abdul Rashid Saheen]

less than two more years. One year would be taken for putting the things in place to gear up for construction. So, in the fifth year, it may be taken up. Till that time, the delay and overrun in this project will definitely be a bad omen for this important and famous project. From the Central Asia, Pakistan and other areas, people are watching as to how shall it happen and take shape.

Maybe some people feel that there should be a stumbling block in this project.

This is a serious worry and I hope the Ministry of Railways will pay immediate attention. I am sorry to place on record that the engineers of Konkan Railway have not probably taken that area seriously. The track area which was within their charge, they have not been able to deliver. Now, 20 kilometres of work, reportedly, has been handed over to IRCON and IRCON people are doing a dedicated job. Of course, I must also accept that. So the new 20 kilometres of work have been handed over to them and the work has not been geared up in that area even now.

There are two things. One that the geology of the area which has not been taken care of, because of that the squeeze in the tunnel of Udhampur-Katra has taken place, second the rumour about the grade change, I am expecting the hon. Minister of Railways will declare it here and now that this (grade-change) is not a reality and the work stopped shall be immediately given a go-ahead.

Sir, I have a very important thing to mention.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude.

SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN: Yes, Sir. I will take one more minute.

This very important project, which will go up to Baramulla will not be able to help too much unless it is extended to Kupwara. Everything is in position and I hope that the Government will take a decision. My humble request to the hon. Prime Minister and the Government of India is this. As it is a national project, allocation has to be made by the Central Government. I hope that this will be done.

Sir, there is the case of giving employment to the family members of those who have been the land owners. That has also got delayed. I hope the hon. Minister will look into that matter also.

Sir, one more important humble submission is this. The designers who are looking after this Loaly-Katra area must be placed somewhere between Katra and Banihal. They should have their headquarters there. If they have to report back to Delhi sitting somewhere here, the things will not improve. I owe my thanks to the people who are looking after this project with a big sense of dedication and they are spending their lot of time and they are making history, of course. My salute to them, my salute is to the Government because they have not done any squeezed the funds in this project and maximum funds have been utilised for Kazigund to Baramulla line throughout and I am expecting that within a year, I hope, that will be done through.

With these submissions, I hope that the Ministry of Railways can do a big service to the Jammu and Kashmir area.

*DR. PRASANNA KUMAR PATASANI (Bhubaneswar): Every year we are participating in Railway budget. Honourable Minister Laluji presently placed a good budget but we are debarred of getting good sanction for our state of Orissa. Our own Chief Minister deputed one Committee of Representatives headed by Hon'ble Speaker and we had a nice meeting with Laluji in his own chamber. As per our demand, Laluji paid us a patient hearing and committed to allot more money to our state. According to all India ratio the money which is allotted by Minister is not sufficient. I don't know most of the time we see whatever money that you are allotting in this budget your officials not utilizing properly. Therefore, most of the time the money is lost and you are diverting to other states. I have been requesting to allot a good sum of amount to Khurdha, Bolangir, new Railway line. Whatever the money you have allocated is not sufficient. And why it is delay of utilizing the last year money to be enquired by your august office. Kurdha Bolangir railway new line is linking in between western Orissa to eastern Orissa and western Orissa is quiet adjacent to your Bihar. If this railway line would be completed soon the people of Bihar may come to see Puri Lord Jagannath, the biggest world heritage Konark and Lingraja Mandir. In the world heritage consequently within 60 kms radius there are three world heritage situated in Orissa that is Konark, Lingaraja and Puri Jagannath temple. This is the only railway line in India which goes through downtrodden area of adivasi, harijan and girijan that is the most poorest area of the country that they don't see the train since

*Speech was laid on the Table.

independence. To promote our state Orissa from below poverty line this railway linkage can promote the economical, commercial revenues of the country. There is another small railway line from Puri to Konark must be surveyed immediately to promote eco tourism. I demand repeatedly that there should be metro railway connecting Kurdha, Cuttack and Bhubaneswar immediately.

Sir, I am representing Bhubaneswar the cultural capital of India, that the capital of our state to the Parliament. As a peoples' representative, I have been demanding to make Bhubaneswar as a No.I city in the country. Now in the IT sector and other scientific achievements which is done by the present government should not be ignored. To promote the city we need some more flyovers to be done immediately. In the 13th Lok Sabha you had only sanctioned *i.e.* Punama Gate according to my request. That is not yet completed. Rest of the gates those are located under east zone Mancheswar, Vir Surendra Sai Nagar, Satya Nagar, Sayed Nagar and another Bhubanesar station leading towards commercial market. Minister should pay personal attention to start this railway overbridge on priority basis to protect the lives of poor people. In every month they are getting accidents and deaths. To avoid this human tragedy a good sum of amount may please be allotted in this Supplementary budget. I have been requesting to you since long to construct one over bridge under Jatoni constituency *i.e.* Near to Kurdha Rly. Junction. To save the lives of poor people those are leading a very miserable lives. That the railway bridge previously constructed in the British period may be collapsed at any time. To save the lives and property of local people I draw immediate attention to implement the project diverting the funds *i.e* unutilized in other states.

In the last government east coast zone is originated and not so progressed and the construction of building works is highly delayed. The headquarter office should be completed and I request the inaugural ceremony must be done by you before the elections and to this zone other ancillary materials and the improvement of works must be executed properly so that this should be best zone in the country.

And lastly in my submission my state Orissa is highly neglected relating to railway sector in the country. Suppose this year you have allotted about 30 crores to Kurdha-Bolangir the project needs more than 1000 crores and if this way the money would be sanctioned this will take another 50 years to complete the project. So I request please allot 300 crores altogether to start the work ahead. Other new line projects submitted by our most popular state government should be paid special attention by you.

[Translation]

*DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA (Ujjain): Hon'ble Sir, I urge for expansion of facilities for passengers in the railways through Rail Budget 2008-09. I also urge the hon. Minister that newly announced Ujjain-Amritsar train should run via Nagda Kota. It will facilitate direct link between the city of Bhagwan Mahakaleshwar and the city of Golden Temple, Amritsar. It will also provide rail connectivity between Indore-Ujjain-Ajmer via Ratlam, between the city of Mahakaleshwar to Pushkar and between Ujjain and Durgah of Ajmer Sharief. An intercity between Ujjain-Ratlam-Neemach-Chittor should be started. 193A/194A Jaipur-Shyamgarh train should be extended upto Nagda-Ratlam. Regular DMU service should be started on Ujjain-Indore-Ujjain, via Fatehabad-Chandrawati ganj route.

Now I would request the hon. Minister for providing stoppages. 9303/9304 Ratlam-Bhopal Intercity and 9311/9312 Indore-Pune Express should be provided a stoppage at Khachroad, 2941/2942 Ahmedabad Asansol-Parsavnath Express and 2247/2248 Ahmedabad-Azimabad-Patna 2909/2910 Bandra-Hazrat Nizamuddin Garib Rath at Nagda, 2415/16–Indore-Nizamuddin Indore Intercity Express should be provided a permanent stoppage at Mahinderpur Road station and 2465/2466 Indore-Sawai Madhopur-Jodhpur-Ranthambore Express at Vikramgarh-Alot.

Sir, I would also urge the hon. Minister for survey and construction. The proposal for gauge conversion of Ujjain-Fatehabad 20 kms stretch should be considered with the gauge conversion of Ratlam-Indore gauge conversion proposal. Ujjain-Angar-Ramganj Mandi broad gauge line should be laid. On Ujjain Nagda stations, station should be constructed towards Madhavnagar and Birlagram and passenger amenities should be provided there.

Sir, now I would like to draw attention of the hon. Minister towards creation of passenger amenities, upgradation of platforms and their expansion. The provision for waiting rooms and drinking water should be made at Piploda-Bagla, Unhel, Aslavda, Tajpur, Runkheda,

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. Satyanarain Jatia]

(WR), foot over bridges at Piploda-Bagla, Unhale and Aslavda. Computerised ticketing facility at Khachrod, Badnagar, Mahindpur Road, Vikramgarh, Alot and at Tarana Road should be provided. Computerised reservation facility should be provided at Khachrand, Badnagar, Tarana Road, Mahodpur Road, Alot and Vikaramgarh.

I urge the hon. Minister to fulfill my above mentioned demands.

[English]

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL (Dibrugarh): Thank you, Sir. In the Railway Budget a lot of promises had been made to modernize the Indian Railways and adequate budgetary provision has also been made. But I am sorry to tell you that in this Budget, the interests of the North-Eastern region are totally avoided and overlooked. We have been demanding the modernization of the railway network in the entire North-East India (*i.e.* Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram, Tripura and Sikkim). Since Independence, we have seen that the growth of railway network in North-East is very slow. It is moving at a snail's speed. The outlook of the Ministry of Railways has to be changed for the overall growth of the railway network, its modernization, providing distinct facilities and all other assistance.

That is why I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister through you that the Government of India has already created a new Ministry for the overall development of the North-East—that is DONER—Department of North Eastern Region. The North-East area has also been constitutionally categorised as a Special Category State because of its backwardness. That is why the nomenclature N.F. Railway, it should be changed name of it as North-East Railway Zone. A separate zone should be created with only the eight States covering the entire North-Eastern region.

Sir, as you know, in the last Railway Budget and also in the General Budget, it was promised that the national projects like rail-cum-road bridge at Bogibeel, conversion of metre gauge to broad gauge from Rangia to Murkongselek and others will be supported by adequate budgetary provision. But in the latest Railway Budget, whatever has been committed by the hon. Railway Minister is missing in the General Budget. He has promised that the ongoing project will be covered by the budget provision in the form of 25 per per cent from the Railway Budget and 75 per cent from the General Budget, but it is totally missing in the General Budget. That is why, I make this special appeal to the hon. Minister of Railways that the particular budgetary allocation should be specified as to how this particular project will be completed as because the Bogibeel Project is targeted to complete by 2012. If it is to be completed by 2012, target fixed by the Railway Ministry, then budgetary allocation has to be made and it must be adequate. I was informed by the local officers that this time a provision of only Rs. 75 crore, that is, 25 per cent has been made from the Railway Budget. If another 75 per cent, that is, Rs. 225 crore has to come from the General Budget, then that should also be specified in a very clear term.

Sir, as you know, Dibrugarh Railway Workshop was established in the year 1881. In this particular Budget, the Railway Minister has promised to modernise many railway workshops in West Bengal and many other States. We welcome his decision, but he seems to have forgotten the Dibrugarh Railway Workshop which is running with 16 shops and total employees' strength of 1800 at present. My appeal, through you, to the hon. Railway Minister is that in this particular modernisation aspect of the railway workshops of Dibrugarh should also be included.

Since they have declared some of the important places like Shimla and Darjeeling as heritage centres, I would submit that the history of Railways started from Dibrugarh in the year 1881. So, Dibrugarh should also be considered as a railway heritage centre.

Now I am coming to the point of job reservation in Grade C and Grade D posts in the NF Railway. There should be 100 per cent job reservation for the local unemployed youth. Irrespective of caste, creed and religion, whoever is born and brought up on the soil of Assam and the North-East, they should be accommodated.

As you know, Sir, there is only single track Railway line connecting Assam to the rest of the country. That is why, we have been demanding that there should be double track of railways. A number of new trains have been declared. I would request that Dibrugarh and Tinsukia should also be given more trains so that communication facility can be improved.

Sir, for your information, let me come to other points. This particular Budget has announced the coach-making factory to be set up in Kerala. The people of Assam have been demanding about setting up a coach-making

factory at Bongaigaon in Assam and for this particular matter, the survey work was also started long back, but this has also been totally ignored. My special appeal to the hon. Railway Minister is that due to increase in the frequency of trains and railway network, this particular coach-making factory should be set up in Bongaigaon.

18.39 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

Sir, Dibru-Sadiya railway line is one of the oldest lines, from Dangori to Choikhowa, it is still running on metre gauge. It should be converted into broad gauge. It is only eight kilometres. Due to large scale increase of population and in view of the fact that, I would like to request that over River Brahmputra at Sadiya, there should be one more rail-cum-road bridge constructed immediately. In Assam and North-East, there is not even a single electric line.

Therefore, electrification of the Railway line should also be there. The Ministry has set up modern Railway network in rest of the country. So we demand immediately to set up a metro network connectivity in Guwahati to tackel the traffic system comfortably.

Lastly, the unemployed youth have always had a strong prejudice and a strong sense of deprivation in the Railways. Therefore, the Ministry should declare a special package for employment in the entire North-East.

*Hon'ble Sir, Construction of Rly. Over bridges at Shantipara (Diburgurah), Sinsukia, Makum, Digboi, Meragherita and Rupai.

New Trains could be introduced in Guwahati, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Silchar.

Frequency up gradation of Rajdhani Express between Guwahati, Tinsukia and Dibrugarh

Increase number of goods trains in Assam

Doubling of Rly tract between Guwahati to Dibrugarh via Tinsukia.*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next speaker is Shri Virendra Kumar. Please be brief, and try to conclude your speech within five minutes.

*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

Those hon. Members who want to lay their written speeches on the Table of the House are allowed to do so, and the same will form part of the proceedings.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, I may be permitted to lay my speech on the Table of the House in order to save the time of the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am also saying the same thing. Yes, you can do it.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I want to begin my speech on Railway Budget. In today's newspaper, I have read that the south bound trains remained stationary for about 6-7 hours due to some fault in the Northern Grid and the passengers faced a lot of problems. Budget session is going on and the Railway Budget is being discussed and fault in the Northern Grid during the discussion itself exposes the shortcomings in our system. Fifty three new trains have been proposed in this budget. Out of that, eight trains would be started only after gauge conversion. The desired attention towards the safety concerns is lacking in this budget. No clear plan has been made for ensuring safe journey. The pace of work for the reconstruction of railway tracks has been so slow in the last 5 years that more than half of the tracks are over burdened. Railway bridges, small or big, are in dilapidated condition and the train accidents occurring every other day show that the infrastructure of the Railways has become sick. Though, we have made the optimum use of the present capacity of the Railways, but no attention has been paid to the concrete efforts needed for increasing this capacity. There is also lack of foresightedness in the railway budget. It proposes to run a train upto Fulwaria but many states like Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka have been deprived of the new trains.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I hail from Madhya Pradesh. The Bina-Katni track in Madhya Pradesh is known as the goods track. A goods train passes through this track every 15-20 minutes. We had much hope from the railway budget that the stations on the Bina-Katni track would be provided new trains. A number of Garib Rath trains are being introduced and we hoped that perhaps our hon. Railway Minister's attention may be drawn to this poor railway line and a Garib Rath train may be introduced on this track but it did not happen. The train passengers of this route did not get any new train. A new train has

[Shri Virendra Kumar]

been announced from Jabalpur to Nizamuddin. Before that, we had been demanding for a long time that the Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express, which runs thrice a week currently, should be run on all seven days and on its current route of Jabalpur-Katni-Bina-Jhansi-Delhi. But, the said new train will run between Jabalpur and Nizamuddin via Itarasi instead. Regarding change in the route of the train between Raipur and Lucknow, we had demanded from the hon. Minister that if a train can be run between Jabalpur and Nizamuddin via Itarasi then why the train from Raipur to Lucknow can not be run via Katni-Bina-Jhansi? There is not a single train for Lucknow on this track presently. Our old demand can also be fulfilled by running the Raipur-Lucknow train via Bina-Katni route.

One important feature of this budget is that attention has been paid to the coolies and they are being made Gangman.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, about 100-125 coolies came to me yesterday. I want to present before the hon. Minister their woes as told to me by them. They told me that only those coolies will be considered eligible who have passed class eight and who are below 35-40 years of age.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, sir, coolies who have been working for a long time and who are already 60 or 70 years old are not going to benefit from this scheme. There is a large number of coolies who have a token but are unable to work physically and they want to pass on this token to their son or nephew but even in that they are facing a lot of problem. Will the cases of such coolies be considered too so that they can transfer their tokens to a member of their family? Whenever the hon. Minister rises to give reply, he should clear the confusion regarding condition of eligibility for coolies to be a Gangman. Regarding safety arrangements, I would like to mention an incident which took place at platform number two of Sagar railway station on 10.8.07. A drinking water stand was being built there. The stand collapsed and two young girls, belonging to scheduled caste, aged 11 years and 13 years respectively, died on the spot. But no financial assistance has been provided so far by the Railways to the victims' families. Neither the contractor provided any assistance. I had spoken to the DRM in this regard and he had assured us that a financial assistance of fifty thousand rupees would be provided but not even 5 paise have been provided to the family. The Railway Administration should come forward to provide assistance to the victims' families with sensitivity in such cases.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I hail from Sagar which has 80% population of the total population of my constituency, I want to urge the hon. Minister that the platform number two should be extended and beautified which is the long standing demand of the people of Sagar. Sufficient safety measures should be taken there so that the people could have the facility to move directly. I would like to lay the remaining points in writing. I thank you for giving me time to speak.

*... A total of 53 new trains had been announced in the Railway Budget out of which eight trains would be run only after gauge conversion is carried out. Budget announcement of reduction of two percent in the fare for sleeper class, AC Chair Car and AC III Tier comes with the rider that the said concession would be applicable only on newly designed high capacity coaches. The fact is that there are merely 225 newly designed coaches. It would take nearly seven to eight years to replace all coaches with the new coaches which means that the passengers traveling by sleeper class, AC Chair Car and AC III Tier have to wait for seven to eight long years to avail of the relief announced in fares.

Similarly, it has been announced that passengers traveling in second class in mail and express trains would be given a concession of Rs. one on a travel costing Rs. 50 and five percent for a further journey. This concession is not applicable for passengers travelling in sleeper class. The seven and five percent reduction in AC Ist and AC IInd fares respectively would not be available throughout the year in all trains.

Seventy prevent of new trains announced last year were not introduced at all. Even so, more new trains have been announced which seems to be a vote grabbing tactic as this is an election year. No clear plan has been laid down for implementing safety measures to ensure a safe journey in trains.

The work relating to replacement of rail tracks has been progressing so slowly that more than half of rail routes have damaged tracks. Both large and small bridges are in dilapidated condition and the frequent accidents prove that the basic infrastructure of the railways has weakened. Optimum use is being made of railways but there is no effort to augment the existing capacity of the railways.

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*... * This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

We are not able to penetrate beneath the illusion created by the new railway budget and see the shaky financial situation of the railways. More than Rs. 80,000 crores have been spent on railways of which there is no account. Railway projects costing Rs. 47 thousand crores have been in limbo for many years. The oldest of the lot is a Central Railways project dating 1972 which was passed in some budget but has not been completed till date. There is lack of farsightedness in the budget which is well illustrated by the fact that a train upto Phulwaria has been proposed but States such as Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat have been totally neglected. The people in Katni-Bina rail division in Madhya Pradesh, also known as goods track, had hoped for a lot in the Railway Budget but had to face disappointment. I would like to draw attention towards some major problems and demands relating to railways which should be looked into, keeping in view regional interests.

Gopal Ahirwar, resident of Nagrotia under Khurai Thana, Bina Road lost two daughters, Kumari Bharti and Radha, on 10.8.2007 when a wall of Railway station No.2 collapsed, burying the two children. The railway department or the contractor has neither paid any compensation to the said person even though seven months have elapsed since the tragedy nor has any judicial action been taken against the contractor concerned.

Malgodam Road Makroniya station should be constructed in Sagar. 1271 and 1272 Bina-Itarsi Vindhyachal Express should be given two minutes stoppage at Naryawali railway station. Bilaspur-Bhopal Express should be given stoppage at Dangidahar station. Sheds should be constructed to protect the passenger from sun and rain at Ganeshganj, Makroniya, Isharwara, Naryawali and Jaruakheda stations. A superfast train should run between Rewa and Coimbatore via Katni, Sagar, Bina, Itarsi, Nagpur, Hyderabad, Bangluru and Coimbatore. This would enable people from Bundelkhand and Rewanchal to travel to South conveniently. A new train should run between Jabalpur and Indore. Shipra Express is always overbooked and runs only three times a week.

A new train should be run from Bina junction to Allahabad via Sagar, Damoh and Katni. Kamayani Express is usually late by five hours in reaching Sagar. If its arrival time is extended by $2^1/_2$ hrs, then it will arrive at Sagar at 6.00 in the morning and passengers would not have to stay awake throughout night. The reservation counter gate situated outside platform No. 2 of Sagar station is the most frequently used gate because 80 percent of the population resides near that area. Hence more hotels should be built and commercial activity be encouraged in that area. Khurai station should be made a model station. Gondwana Express should be run from Jabalpur because this is a revenue earning train and passengers from Damoh and Sagar are not able to get reservation or seats in this train. Sagar is also a divisional army headquarters but no VIP waiting room exists here. An assurance had been given in this regard earlier. Display board showing coach position remains out of order causing inconvenience to the passengers.

Arrival time of the Gondwana Express at Sagar has been changed to 2.05 AM which is inconvenient for the passengers. The original arrival time should be restored. The assurance of extending the length of foot over-bridge at Sagar station should be fulfilled.

Chirmiri Damoh train should be extended upto Sagar. Jabalpur-Jammu Tawi Express should run on all seven days of the week. This would benefit the travellers visiting Vaishno Devi Shrine, the most frequented place of pilgrimage in the country. Bhopal-Bilaspur train should be extended upto Raipur and should run as a passenger train.

Raipur-Lucknow train should run via Katni-Bina-Jhansi. If Jabalpur-Nizamuddin could run via Itarasi, why not the Lucknow train? The stand contractor at Sagar railway station is forcibly charging more than the fixed rates. This practice should be stopped immediately. All express trains should be given a two minute stoppage at Makroniya Railway suburban/sub-city station. The crossing at Kanpur-Bhopal national highway near Makroniya station often remains closed. Hence, an overbridge should be constructed there at the earliest. GRP supervision is needed at platform No.2 of Sagar railway station. Anti-social elements tend to congregate there. The length of shed at platform No.2 at Khurai station should be extended.

A survey for laying a direct rail line from Nagpur to Lalitpur via Sagar had been carried-out during the British era. If it is implemented and a line is laid from Nagpur to Lalitpur, it would benefit the people of Chhindwara and Seoni and the travelling distance of all trains going from South India to Delhi would be reduced by 400 km. The stoppage of Kamayani Express, Chhipra Express and Gondwana Express should be provided at Jaruakheda

[Shri Virendra Kumar]

station. A large number of goods trains on Bina-Katni line stop at Sagar station and the running staff of these trains change their duties here. The goods trains often remain stationed here. Hence, a third platform should be constructed for these trains.

Earlier Utkal Express used to stop at Ganeshganj station. At present, temporary stoppage of train No. 1071 and 1072 have been provided at this station which should be made regular. A large number of students from Khurai railway station travel to Kota for studies. A good number of businessmen also travael to Kota. Hence, the stoppage of Jabalpur-Jammu Tavi Express should be provided at this station. It has been observed many times that at Sagar station the tickets are sold at only one counter before the arrival of the trains at platform No.I and 2. General tickets should be sold at both the ticket counters one hour before the arrival of the trains at both the platforms. But the officials there complain of shortage of staff.

Durg-Nizamuddin Sampark Kranti Express halts at Khurai for one minute due to technical reasons but a commercial halt of this train should be provided at Sagar Khurai like the one at Katni and Bina. The passenger trains do not stop at platform No.I at Naryavali station, hence foot over bridge should be constructed at Jaruakhera and Naryavali stations. The cases of pick pocketing at Sagar station are on the rise, hence appropriate action should be taken to check these incidents.

The stalls of various saanchi milk products and ice cream should be provided at both the platforms at Sagar station. Keeping in view the increasing population the number of general coaches and sleeper coaches should be increased in Jabalpur-Jaipur Express. A time frame should be fixed for furnishing replies to the letters sent by all the honourable members of Parliament. It has been noticed that the replies to the letters of MPs are not furnished even after 4 to 6 months. The position of coaches is not being shown at platform No. 1 and 2 at Sagar station which is causing inconvenience for the passengers.

Two years back four points were fixed for city booking in Sagar. At present, two booking counters are in operation but at least one booking counter should be set up in Makronia/Rajakhedi with a population of 50 thousand. The work near platform No.2 at Sagar station is going at a snail's pace which should be completed at the earliest. Beautification of Sagar station as well as of surrounding areas should be carried out. There is a long pending demand of Intercity Express from Sagar to Bhopal and this train shold now be introduced.

Famous pilgrimage spot Anandpur trust is situated on Bina-Guna line. The stoppage of Goa Express and other trains is provided for 15 days during the fair. Hence, the stoppage of Goa Express, Pushpak Express, Nanded Sachkhand Express should be provided at Bina station. Regular trains from Bhopal, Capital of Madhya Pradesh, to Patna via Bina-Satna and from Bhopal to Balsad, Mumbai via Bairagarh township, Surat should be introduced. The work of proposed and sanctioned stamp dam for providing water supply to Bina railway colony and railway station should be started soon. There is no train from Bina to Bhopal railway station after 8.10 p.m. till 12.25 am. Hence the halt of Sachkhand and Goa Express should be provided at Bina station.

Due to Mahamaya being shunted at Bina station, the passenger trains come at platform No. 2 and 3 and the people rush towards the trains. Risk of an accident is always there even after the announcements are made. Hence the train should be shunted at platform No.3. Sagar level crossing on Bina-Jhansi line is often closed, where under-bridge or over-bridge should be constructed. Railway inquiry number at Bina railway station is always busy. Addition telephone lines should be provided. Several trains stop at Bina station and the trains are stopped many a times at outer signal. Hence additional platform should be constructed.

There is no TTE in sleeper coaches of 1271 and 1272 Vindhyachal Express running between Itarasi and Bhopal due to which the passengers have to face a lot of problems between Bina and Bhopal. Gondwana Express is high revenue earning train which rarely runs vacant. It should run as a regular train from Jabalpur. In Bina, Bina Bazaria Shamshan Ghat is situated near Jhansi level crossing. That's why it is not being renovated. It should be renovated. Mandi Bamora station is an important place for fifty villages of Bina and Kurbai region from where the passengers take trains. Hence the stoppage of Chhipra Express, Jhelum Express should be provided at Mandi Bamora station. Earlier Pathankot used to stop at Karauda station and the stoppage of the train should be revived.

The street vendors have been selling their items in small shops at Ganeshward on railway law near Bina

railway station for the last several years. Keeping in view their livelihood, the railways should permit them to carry on their business after fixing rent. The railway protection force (RPF) at Sagar, Damoh, Katni, Bina, Bhopal, Itarsi, Jabalpur do not give bail in even bailable offence. The persons coming to stand surety are misbehaved. The family members of persons arrested are not informed. Human rights are being violated. A high level inquiry should be carried out. The shortage of doctors at Bina railway hospital should be addressed and medical facilities there should be increased.

The construction of an oil refinery near Bina city is going on in full swing. Hence a cycle stand, booking office and one platform should be constructed on the western side of Bina railway station. A shed has been partly constructed at both the ends of platform No.1 at Bina railway station but there is no shed in the middle of the platform where the passengers have to face most of the difficulties. Hence a shed should be constructed here. Bina railway station, being a junction does not have the required facilities for the passengers. Hence the number of ticket-counters should be increased.

Due to the proposed oil refinery, Bina has become an important station. Hence keeping in view the demands of the officers of oil refinery and the public, the stoppage of Bhopal Shatabdi Express should be provided at Bina. About 500 acres of railway land near Bina railway station has been under encroachment. The said land should be got vacated from unauthorized occupation and a plan should be prepared for using this land for commercial purpose. The beautification of Bina railway station as well as its surrounding areas should be carried out.*

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, I may be permitted to lay my written speech on the Table of the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

*SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, while supporting the Railway Budget 2008-09, I would like to submit that the following issues need to be urgently addressed by the Railway authorities.

Many of the issues are pending for several years. The concerned people expect that the UPA Government will pay attention to these burning problems affecting thousands of daily commuters and other people and solve the problems at the earliest.

I am giving below some of the burning issues affecting the people:

1. Urgent need to solve the problem of water logging at Bandel Railway Station in the Howrah Division of Eastern Railway - a) at the Bazarpara point and b) at the Platform area;

2. Need to increase the number of Suburban Trains in the Howrah and Bandel; Howrah-Burdwan; Sealdah-Naihati; Sealdah-Krishnanagar; Sealdah-Bandel; Sealdah-Bongaon in the Eastern Railway; Sheoraphuly-Tarakeshwar; Bandel-Katwa and similarly in the suburban sections of the South-Eastern Railway.

3. Urgent need to increase the number of coaches in the Suburban Trains from 9 to 12 coaches.

4. Need to ensure punctuality in the Suburban Service as also other services.

5. To provide Eastern freight corridor up to Deep Sea Port at Kolkata and to Haldia Port.

6. Urgent need for completion of the doubling of Railway lines in (a)Jirat-Katwa (in Bandel-Katwa Section) and b)Nalikul-Tarakeswar (in Sheoraphuly-Tarkeshwar section).

7. To continue Nalikul Railway Station in the Sheoraphuly-Tarakeshwar section of the Howrah Division as a regular station and not to convert it into a halting station.

8. To regularise the level crossing at Chandanpur and facilitate the construction of road from Chandanpur Railway Station to Durgapur Express Way Crossing Railway Line at Chandanpur in Howrah-Burdwan chordline (as per request Rs. 15,23,000/-(Rupees Fifteen lakhs and twenty-three thousand only) as per the estimate by the DRM, Howrah Office but subsequently not pursued by the Railways and the money was returned back to Collector, Hooghly. The scheme is to be taken afresh;

9. Urgent need to increase the passenger amenities including provision of drinking water, effective Public address system, clean waiting hall for the passengers, particularly for the aged, disabled

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Rupchand Pal]

women and children; telephone facilities etc. in all important Railway Stations.

10. Widening of the sub-way at Bhadreshwar Railway Station in the Howrah-Bandel line. Meanwhile in Howrah division of Eastern Railway as per estimate of the Railways two MPs - MP from Hooghly and MP from Srirampur have contributed from MPLADS for construction of this sub-way.

11. Urgent need for a Rehabilitation Plan for the oustees and persons evicted resulting from Railway Development work. The Railways need to provide suitable land for construction of their dwelling places and vending outlets and provide suitable land to cooperatives of Railway hawkers/ vendors at Bandel and Chinsura.

12. Urgent need to use vacant Railway lands for cultivation of bio-diesel (like Jatropha etc.);

13. Urgent need to improve Railway management in different areas instead of taking privatisation route which will be ultimately harmful for the people of the country.

14. Need for connecting Nalikul in the Sheoraphuly-Tarakeshwar Section of Howrah division with the Howrah-Burdwan Railway chord line so that the Tarakeshwar branch line can be connected to Sealdah.

15. Urgent need to make available Railway land to Haripal Panchayat Samiti for construction of a public stand in the interest of the Railway passengers.

16. To provide Railway land for Singur in the Sheoraphuly-Tarakeshwar railway line for construction of an approach road by Singur Panchayat Samity in the interest of the Railway passengers.

17. To construct suitable terminals for suburban trains at Howrah and Sealdah.

18. To construct at suitable terminal for SE Railway at Kolkata.

19. To introduce a daily Jana Satabdi train between Sealdah and New Jalpaiguri.

20. To extend Kolkata Metro upto Dakhineswar.

Sir, I would like to Submit the following demand for consideration by the Railway Minister-(a) The urgent need to take over by the Railways the two Wagon Manufacturing Units of West Bengal-(i) Braithwaite and (ii) Burn Standard (Howrarh and Burnpur).

[Translation]

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasad Ji, Shri Rathwa Ji, all the officers and employees of railways for having presented Fifth Rail Budget. Railways have shown a record profit of Rs. 24 thousand crore. The UPA Government in its manifesto promised progress and development in the country and the railways have set a record by showing excellent performance. Therefore, all of them deserve congratulations.

Sir, as my previous speaker and also other Members of NDA have commented on rail budget. In its furtherance, I would like to quote a few lines from the report of expert committee of railways, constituted under the Chairmanship of Dr. Rakesh Mohan during NDA's regime. The report stated:-

[English]

"Indian Railways is today on the verge of financial crisis. To put it bluntly, the business as usual low growth will rapidly drive Indian Railways to fatal bankruptcy. In 16 years, Government of India will be saddled with an additional financial liability of over Rs. 61,000 crore *i.e.,* US$ 15.36 billion. On a pure operating level, Indian Railways is in a terminal debt trap."

[Translation]

The said report was presented during NDA's regime. Since UPA Government came to power, it has now presented fifth budget. I have just said that the railways has earned a profit of Rs. 24 thousand crore. It is a matter of pride for the whole nation. In view of constraints of time, I express my gratitude to the hon'ble Minister who has provided at least something to everybody, each section, be it poor, rich, middle class or others, through the budget. Even patients and students have been provided concessions in fares.

Sir, since my student hood I observed a trend that in run up period to the Rail Budget, people used to

anticipate that this much fare may be increased, as increase in passenger fares was obvious. But, since UPA came to power and Laluji assumed the charge of Railway Ministry, the fares have been decreased in place of increasing, in all the five budgets. The fares of upper class AC I class. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you want to make any point concerning your constituency, make it first.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Yes, I will say that also.

Passenger fares have been reduced by 7 percent in AC I Class, by 4 percent in AC II Class and by 3 percent in AC III Class. Coolies have been made Gangman and Gangman will be made Gate Man. It will solve the problem of unemployment and vacant posts will also be filled up and the coolies will get facilities. Girl students up to B.A. have been provided free rail passes for going to colleges and for male students this facility has been provided upto 12th level. Concession has also been granted to patients, senior citizens. The hon'ble Minister of Railways has made several provisions for all sections of society.

Sir, concessions have also been provided for patients suffering from incurable diseases such as AIDS and Cancer while traveling for treatment purposes. The construction of freight corridor will provide ample opportunities. It will give a boost to transportation of goods. Earlier, people were apprehensive while sending their goods through railways as goods trains used to be stranded for several days at stations resulting in delayed delivery of goods. Now the situation has improved and now goods reach well on time and that in why now people prefer trains for dispatching goods. It has benefited the public and the railways as well.

Sir, further 21 stations have been identified for up gradation to world class station. The birth place of Lord Krishna, Mathura has been included in the said list on my request. Therefore, I am highly grateful to the hon'ble Minister. I have some other demands, which I would like to lay is the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I had asked you to put up your demands first, you have already spoken for eight minutes.

KUNWAR MANVENDRA SINGH: Sir, the hon'ble Minister got survey of Khurja-Raya railway line conducted during last budget. Indeed, the survey took place. My submission is that it should be included in supplementary budget. From here there is no trains for Kolkata. A new train up to Patna has been started. I urge the hon'ble Minister to extend the said train upto Kolkata. Further, there is railway link between Mathura and Jaipur. I urge that Mathura may be linked to Jaipur.

There is a train between Mathura-Alwar, that may be extended upto Jaipur. It will facilitate passengers going to Jaipur.

Further out of three flyovers, I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister for Chatikara flyovers. Since 1984, I have been demanding for third line from Palwal to Mathura. I am grateful to the hon'ble Minister as the work on this line is in progress. After completion of the said line, I would request for approval of construction of four flyovers, namely Chatikara, Chata, Machhlimandi, and Janmsathan so that the villagers and the pilgrims will feel convenient to travel as they have been facing problems in absence of these flyovers.

In addition to it, I would urge the Govt. to reconsider the proposal of states with regard to 50% shaming of rail projects expenditure by them. I would say, since railway is earning so much profit, it should bear the cost of projects if state governments do not contribute.

I conclude with these words and I would submit my remaining demands in writing.

Kindly fulfil my old demand of Cheema halt station and Nari Saimri halt station as I have demanded in my speech on budget today on 10.3.08.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: More than 70 Members are yet to speak.

[Translation]

Any Member who is given an opportunity to speak believes that he is the last speaker but he is not the last one and there are Members waiting for their turn after him. 70 Members are yet to speak. Therefore, it is my

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

humble request to you that you please present your demands as there have been enough of lectures.

[English]

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): I stand to support the Railway Budget. In a few minutes, I would like to say a few things, particularly about Kerala. Electrification in Kerala is done from Shoranur to Trivandrum but we do not get the full utility of it because we are not having NUMU from Kerala. It does not help the passengers. Hence, our request is to start NUMU services in Kerala for which we may require additional tracks and also workshops for servicing NUMUs, which may be constructed there.

Secondly, the railway line between Ernakulam and Shoranur is utilization to the extent of 160 per cent. Two ports are coming up. Some other big developments are also taking place in Cochin and Trivandrum.

19.00 hrs.

If Vizhinjam Port in Trivandrum and Vallarpadam Container Terminal in Cochin are coming, then probably the Railways will have to provide for more traffic facilities. So, what I suggest is that an additional line should be put between Ernakulam and Shornur so that the capacity is enhanced.

Here again, a survey is to be conducted from Ernakulam to Guruvayoor for a new railway line, which will be a part of the Konkan Railway on the coastal railway system, that will be something like a by-pass. So, Ernakulam-Guruvayoor-Thanur, and then to Konkan Railway—this should be done.

Another thing is that there is already a survey done for Trichur-Nenmara railway line. But that should be implemented and action should be taken so that the construction work could start. Here, the problem that I would like to point out is this. This would also help lessen the pressure on the line Shornur-Ernakulam because if the train goes from Trichur to Nenmara and then to Chennai, it would help.

You perhaps know that Guruvayoor is a big pilgrim centre. As a pilgrim centre, Guruvayoor deserves a hotel or a Yatri Niwas by the Railway Tourism Corporation, which has to be given sanction to.

There is a demand made here for increasing the frequency of the train services from Kannur to Yashwantpur. Now, it is a weekly train and it should be made as a daily train; that is a train where you always have a lot of passengers. There is also a demand that the train that goes to Yashwantpur should be extended to Puttaparti where there is a very big super specialty hospital where many people from Kerala go and it is also pilgrim centre.

Another thing is that Guruvayoor Station should have a second platform and Guruvayoor Station platform should be covered because this is a pilgrim centre that attracts large number of people. Already at the Trichur Railway Station, a second entry has been inaugurated by the Minister of State of Railways, Shri Velu. But the construction work of the second railway, the platform, the ROB, booking-counter -all these works are pending and the Railway authorities are saying that they are not getting the contractors to do the work. I am surprised why it should happen like that. Please take steps so that these works are done as soon as possible.

Then, we have the Guruvayoor-Thanur railway line for which sanction has been given some 10-15 years ago, but the work has not been started because of the land acquisition problem. But with the new Bill which we are going to enact regarding the land acquisition, this problem might be solved in a way that this line will come up.

The last point that I would like to say is that we were demanding a new railway zone for the peninsular region, of our sub-continent, maybe on the South-West side. It may include the Konkan Railway from Goa to Mangalore and also the other parts which are remaining—Trivandrum and Palghat.

Additionally, Salem division can also be made part of that zone. If a zone is there probably the development of that area can be further improved. So, I would like the Ministry to seriously look into this matter also.

We are supporting this Budget because it did not put a lot of burden on people. The Government has now announced certain new norms for the ROBs based on which Ernakulam-Kayamkulam sector, a thickly populated area through which the rail passes, requires more ROBs. The Government should take action in this regard.

I support this Budget and I hope these proposals would find favour with the Government.

*SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY (Narasaraopet): I rise to support the Railway Budget 2008-09. The Budget introduced a wide range of passenger amenities convenient and comfortable especially for the common man. The Budget slashed passenger fares for all classes of travel, upped existing discounts for students and women senior citizens. The Railway Minister has not raised passenger fares this time also and still recorded its highest - ever cash surplus profit of Rs. 25,000 crores which is shared rightly with its customers and passengers, the efforts made in this regard must be praised.

The introduction of 10 new Garib Rath, 53 new trains, extension of trains and increase in frequency of 11 trains besides gauge conversion, doubling and construction of flyover are really commendable.

As it would be difficult to finance a large number of programmes running into several crores solely from Railways own resources, Government's decision to start many public - private partnership schemes to attract investment to the tune of Rs. 1,00,000 crore over five years are praise-worthy.

The projects likely to see public-private partnership include world class facilities at railway stations, setting up of rolling stock production units and construction of multi-model logistics parks, expansion of network and allowing commercial usage of railway land by the Rail Land As on 29.11.2007, there were 146627 numbers of encroachments with a total of 1575.75 area (in hectare) under encroachments.

So the Railways should take early affective steps to free their land of encroachments as per provisions of the Public Premises Act 1971 and Railway Act 1989.

An early land acquisition ordinance may also be passed to enable expeditious commissioning of important railway projects.

Sir, the pace of construction of new railway lines, increasing the speed of trains is hopelessly slow as compared to other Countries. During British period, an average 572 kms of lines per annum were added for 94 years with total 54000 kms approximately, whereas after independence we could add only 166 kms per annum in 60 years totaling to approximately 10,000 kms. The average speed of our passenger or express trains is approximately 26 kms per hour and goods train only 24 kms whereas in other countries trains are running at more than 100 to 200 kms per hour and they have now bullet trains which run even faster. So Railways should also take all necessary steps to make Railways likewise.

At present Railway's share in transportation of goods is only 30% and 70% is done by Roadways. To increase its revenues, the Railways should identify more routes to its network and construct new lines.

Since Independence, the construction of new lines in South Central Railways is far below the national average. The fate of on-going projects is no better. There are a number of rail projects, lying incomplete, for want of timely release of funds resulting in considerable delay in their completion and unnecessary escalation in the cost. The Railways, therefore, see and ensure that once a project is cleared and sanctioned funds are released and they should be completed without delay in a stipulated period.

The South Central Railway has not been given a fair deal in the present Railway Budget. A number of justified demands submitted by Andhra Pradesh Government to the Centre from time to time pertaining to pending projects, new lines, new trains, doubling and electrification of trains, increase in frequency and extension of trains are still lying uncleared as adequate funds have not been released. I draw the attention of the Hon'ble Railway Minister especially to the projects, namely:-

New Lines (Nadikudi to Srikalahasti)

The construction of new Railway lines from Nadikudi to Srikalahasti in Andhra Pradesh, covering Guntur, Prakasam, Nellore and Chittoor Districts, is a long pending proposal. This line will cover the backward areas covering 309 kms and Ayacut areas of Nagarjuna Sagar, Railway board has sanctioned for updating of survey report in 2004-05. Accordingly, the survey report was submitted to the Board in February 2005.

The estimated cost of the project is Rs. 711.52 crores with ROR of 15.08%. This will be an alternative and all-weather route between Hyderabad and Chennai and down south passing through Nagarjunasagar Ayacut area and also backward areas of four Districts. It satisfies all the norms or Railway Board for taking up of new Railway lines.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri M. Raja Mohan Reddy]

I may state here that on the present Vijayawada - Chennai line, there is often disruption of trains as bridges and lines are damaged during rainy season. Sometimes the entire rail traffic is completely paralysed for days together putting railways to enormous losses upto the tune of hundred of crores. Hence, to avoid the huge losses and smooth running of trains, this new all-weather route is absolutely necessary, which may be taken up on priority basis and complete the project in a stipulated period.

Piduguralla-Narasaraopet

The Piduguralla-Narasaraopet, (33 kms long stretch) is a very important link, which connects Narasaraopet with Hyderabad and Chennai. Narasaraopet is the Divisional and my Parliamentary Constituency Head Quarter. It is therefore requested that for the safety and convenience of new route may be taken up on priority basis.

Doubling and Electrification of Bibinagar-Nadikudi/ Macherla-Nallaoadu, Vijayawada-Gudivada-Machilipatnam -Bhimavaram/Narsapur-Nidadavoplu, Guntur-Tenali-Repalle projects may be accorded early sanction for public interest.

Andhra Pradesh State Government has already send proposals for increase in allocation of funds in favour of some on-going projects such as Nandyal-Yerraguntla, Kotipalli-Narasapur, Kakinada-Pithapuram and Macherla-Nalgonda. The proposals may kindly be accepted for timely completion.

The requests are pending with the Railways which pertain exclusively to the safety and convenience of passengers especially old, infirm and women: To provide box-type Road under bridge of size with 8 ft. height and 15 ft. breadth at KM-46 at Narasaraopet Railway Station limits. This is long pending issue.

To provide Foot Over Bridge in Vinukonda Railway Station and raise the height of the 2nd platform.

To provide second platform and foot overbridge in Markapur Railway Station.

To raise the level of platform and cover over area in Cumbum Railway Station.

To provide foot over bridge and to raise the level of 2nd platform in Piduguralla Railway Station.

To extend the cover over platform and lighting facility in Gurazala Railway Station.

To raise the level of platforms, cover over platform and lighting in Rentachintala Railway Station.

Reconstruction of Macherla Railway Station Building and to raise the level of platform. It is an old station.

To increase the number of Bogies to Secunderabad-Guntur Fast Passenger Train.

These may be executed on priority basis as a special case.

Setting up of a new Coach Rehabilitation Workshop

Hon'ble Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has requested to set-up a new Coach Rehabilitation Workshop at Nandaluru in Guntakal Division, which is located on the Chennai-Mumbai route. This is ideally suited for receiving coaches from all directions. There is large extent of land available at Nandalur to meet the requirement of setting up of Coach Rehabilitation Workshop.

Government of Andhra Pradeh has assured to make available the required land as well as providing the required infrastructure.

The Gooty and Kazipet Electrical Loco Sheds are over utilized and Locomotives are sent to the other places for Periodical Overhauling (POH). To meet the ever increasing demand for POH facilities, it would be ideal to locate the POH facilities for Electrical locomotives at Kazipet also to save time and cost.

Since Kazipet is centrally located and sufficient land with required infrastructure facilities is available it would be easier for the plant to be set up here.

If further improvement in infrastructure/or any other facility is required, Government of Andhra Pradesh would be ready to extend the facilities as required by the Ministry of Railways.

In the end I may draw the kind attention of the Hon'ble Railway Minister to some suggestions made by the former President of India Shri APJ Abdul Kalam in recently concluded two-day conference (February 29 and March 1, 2008) on "Railway Vision for 2030". Some of them are replacing old chain pulling system with a new system which will register the finger prints of the user

passenger trains at the 200 kmph and goods train at 150 kmph, door to door services, Double Decker trains to handle festival crowds, solar energy for lightning trains, switchover to bio-diesel and collaboration with Indian Space Research Organization for communication system in trains. Multi-layered platform at all type I & II cities, zero accidents and integration of all 28 states through Railway network by 2030. All these suggestions are very valuable for future development plans of the Railways, which may be seriously taken into consideration.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAM SINGH KASWAN (Churu): Sir, the gauge conversion work of Suratpura-Hanumangarh, Sriganganagar and Churu-Sikar-Jaipur (present Sriganganagar-Jaipur railway line) falling in my constituency have been included in the current budget. This is an important project and its completion will make a direct connectivity route between Sriganganagar and Jaipur. Only token amout has been allocated for this project. Therefore, it is requested that full amount should be allocated so that the work could be completed. In the previous rail budget a provision for gauge conversion of Rewari-Bikaner, Sadulpur-Hissar and Ratangarh-Degana railway line was made, and it is necessary to complete the same in this financial year. The people of my constituency are greatly disappointed that Ratangarh-Sardarshahar railway line of my constituency has not been included in the current budget for gauge conversion, this railway track has been in operation for nearly one decade. Sardarshahar is commercially and/educationally important place where students from all over the world come for the purpose of studies and research. For business and employment, the local people go to different places all over the country. It is extremely necessary to include the said project in the current budget. The Government of Rajasthan has proposed a number of projects to be included in the Rail Budget but the Railway Ministry has not considered any of these proposals.

There is a long pending demand for laying of railway line from Sikar to Nokha via Salasar-Bidasar, Bhiwani to Churu via Loharu-Pilani, Sardarshahar to Hanumangarh and from Churu to Nohar via Taranagar, which is very important for this area. Therefore, this should also be included in this budget.

Gauge conversion work of Rewari-Sadulpur and Sadulpur-Hissar railway line is on the verge of completion, but in the budget no provision has been made for the trains that are to be introduced after gauge conversion whereas a provision has been made for running trains on other routes after gauge conversion. Therefore, it is extremely important to make a provision for running at least two express trains one in the night and one in day time between Delhi to Sadulpur after the gauge conversion. In the similar manner, trains should be run on Sadulpur-Hissar railway line.

The biggest problem of my Parliamentary Constituency is that there is no Railway level crossing. In the absence of unmanned or manned railway-crossings, the rural public has to face a lot of problems. There is 450 kms. of railway line in Churu Parliamentary Constituency. There are merely 25-30 railway crossings and that too on both sides of the city and the roads connecting two villages are going to be closed now. The rural people are making a 'dharna' protest but nothing has been done in the budget for providing any relief to them. The crisis would further aggravate after gauge conversion. A provision has been made in the budget for converting unmanned railway crossings into manned railway crossings but no provision has been made for making new railway-crossings. The State Government does not have the resources to spend Rs. 1 crore and 20 lakh for each crossing. I have been raising this issue in every budget discussion but so far no solution has been provided for this. These days every farmer is owning a camel cart, tractor, jeep etc. and only they know how difficult it is to cross the railway line in order to reach their farms, villages, tehsil, Sub-Divisional headquarters, etc.

Gauge conversion work of Sadulpur-Hissar railway line is going on in my home district Rajgarh. Level Crossing number 32 which is located at 49.314 kms. north-east of Jumpha railway station is being shifted to 50.04 kilometers due to construction of new platform where it is not required at all; This railway crossing will not help in connecting any village. There is Indasar village in the south of the same place which has been connected with NH 65. Since the last one month, the villagers are sitting on a dharna demanding the said level crossing to be shifted near Indasar village. It has become very difficult for the Local Administration to maintain Law and Order. Both the Gram Panchayats, Sub-Divisional Officer, Rajgarh, District Collector, Churu have written to Railway Zonal Manager, Bikaner and other officials and issued no objection certificates for shifting the aforesaid railway crossing near Indasar. They have also apprised the

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ram Singh Kaswan]

concerned officials on phone in this regard but so far no action has been taken. In public interest the aforesaid railway-crossing should be shifted to 51.585 kms. (Pole No. 51/9) near village Indasar so that 20-25 villages may be benefited from it.

Construction of a Railway Under Bridge (RUB) near Guglawa Kirtaan hault, Dokwa, Payali and Sheetalnagar and Benisar Station at Loharu-Bikaner section will resolve this problem. At present, gauge conversion work is also going on, so there will not be any particular problem. Besides, on the same railway line, on the western side of the Rampura Station at Guglava road, Bevad-Bhojan, Guglava-Kirtan halt stations and on the road in the western side of Kandharan halt, near Hadiyal, Molisar, Payli, Sheetal Nagar, Bigga, Benisar, Hemasar and Sudsar villages near Khasoli village on Churu-Sikar road railway underbrige and at Bhojasar, Padihara, Balsamad on Ratangarh-Degana railway line and Pahadsar, Hasiavas and Sidhmukh (Bhadra Road) on Sadulpur-Hanumangarh railway line and in the western side of Sidhmukh Gram on railway line for Hanumangarh from where a very important road goes from Jaipur to Shri Ganga Nagar from where more than 500-600 vehicles pass through daily and near Lasedi on Lutana Sadasukh road on Sadalpur-Hissar railway line, construction of manned or unmanned railway level crossing is very necessary in public interest. In the absence of these crossings rural people are facing a lot of difficulties. These are accident prone areas and farmers have to cross the railway lines in a wrong way. The hon'ble Minister of Railways himself hails from rural area. There could be no bigger problem than this in the rural areas. He can solve this problem. He has admitted in his budget that the State Government lacks the resources, it cannot allocate funds for these level crossings. I have raised this matter in the House several times and I have met him personally also in this regard. However, no provision has been made in the current budget also.

Alongwith it, there is a long pending demand of halt stations at Anandvasi, Jaiselmer and Benisar areas of my Parliamentary Constituency which is very necessary. Despite the grant of approval for computerized reservation facility at Ladnu station, this facility has not been started there. It should be started as early as possible. There is a need to provide computerized reservation facility at Shridungargarh station also. Please grant approval for it without any delay. Please provide a halt to Badmer-Guwahati Express 5631 and 5632 at Degana Junction. It is a very important train which connects my Parliamentary. Constituency to Kolkata. Sadalpur junction is a very important station of north-western railways. This station connects the entire Rajasthan to Haryana-Punjab and Delhi. Therefore, this station should be developed as a model station. A large number of martyers of Kargil war were from my area. Therefore, there is a need to provide separate waiting rooms with better facilities for defence personnel. An over-bridge should be constructed at railway level crossings near Churu Junction, Ratangarh Junction, Sadulpur Junction and Sardar Shahar Sujangarh Station.

[English]

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE (Idukki): Thank you, Sir. I am not going into the general issues. The Indian Railways have shown surpluses since 2005 under Lalu Ji and in 2008, raising a cash surplus of Rs. 25,000 crore before dividend. As the hon. Minister said, on a benchmark of net surplus before dividend, this puts the Indian Railways above most of the fortune 500 companies in the world. I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister and his team for this commendable performance.

The various strategies in achieving this have been mentioned in the Railway Budget speech. I do not want to repeat them. From what we could gather from the speech of the hon. Minister, the Indian Railways will be facing a stiff competition from low cost airlines in the case of upper class segment of passenger business. Short term medium distance passenger business will be facing intense competition from very vastly improved road services.

To meet this challenge, the Railways should develop dedicated high speed freight cum passenger corridors. In fact, in the Budget the Minister has announced the sanctioning of dedicated freight corridors from Mumbai to Delhi and from Delhi to Kolkata. In a major policy shift the Railways have announced the construction of dedicated freight corridors separating freight traffic from passenger traffic on trunk routes. This is being done parallel to the Golden Quadrilateral Highway and also in its diagonals. I would like to point out that when this particular Golden Quadrilateral Highway was constructed, it was supposed to connect various parts of our country. But the Western Corridor starting from Kanyakumari to Mumbai was omitted actually. In fact, we had raised it then but the then NDA Government did not find it feasible or possible to sanction it.

Now, the Railways are also taking up this major project. The basic question is whether we should have a separate freight corridor itself. The experts say that we should be having a dedicated passenger corridor parallel to the Golden Quadrilateral and parallel to the North-South, East-West Express Highways. In fact, the freight traffic could be shifted to the existing lines because for the freight traffic the maximum speed required is only 100 kms. per hour. That is possible within the existing tracks whereas to run bullet trains, high speed trains, which run at 250-300 kms speed, we will need dedicated passenger corridors.

I would request the Railway Ministry to think about it because once we lay dedicated freight corridors, it will be impossible to have another dedicated passenger corridor. How to connect these two? Otherwise, these two have to be integrated. We can have dedicated high speed corridors where both freight and passenger trains could ply.

In the Eleventh Plan, the Railways plan to have capacity enhancement, both freight and traffic, by utilising the dedicated routes. Considering the size of our country, we are of a sub-continent size, and also keeping in view, the need for fast travelling in modern times, I would request the hon. Minister to include Mumbai-Kanyakumari sector also under high speed corridor project.

Various needs of Kerala State have been mentioned here. I would restrict myself to certain points relating to the hilly district of Kerala, Idukki where there is not even an inch of railway line. The hilly district is known for its tourism potential. In fact, not only of Kerala's but the country's main tourist centres like Munnar and Thekadi, the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, are located in the hilly district Idukki of Kerala. It is not connected by railway. In fact, I had requested in the earlier budget discussions also for a railway line, the Madura-Theni line via Chinnamannur-Uttamapalayam-Kumbum to Lower Camp. If this line is extended to Lower Camp in Tamil Nadu, it will reach five kilometres near to Thekadi, the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary. That will connect the hilly areas of Kerala and it will be a boon to tourism.

Also to give a boost to the tourist centre, the Periyar Wildlife Sanctuary, I had made a request. The Railways need not have to spend a single paisa. Several new trains have been announced. One is Dehra Dun-Kochivelli Express. It can be renamed as Kochivelli-Dehra Dun Periyar Express.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay the rest of your speech on the Table.

SHRI K. FRANCIS GEORGE: I am concluding now.

Also, for Idukki, the nearest boarding station is Alwaye. Several important trains have no stop there. So, I would request the hon. Minister to consider Trivandrum-Bikaner, Trivandrum-Chennai Superfast Train, Kochivelli-Chandigarh Sampark Kranti, Kochivelli-Bangalore, Kochivelli-Lokmanya Tilak Garib Rath and also the new train that has been announced in the Budget should stop at Alwaye so that Idukki bound passengers will find it convenient to board it.

So, I would once again request the hon. Minister to consider these points and also to name the new train as Periyar Express.

[Translation]

*SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS SADHU YADAV (Gopalganj): Sir, I rise to support the railway budget for 2008-09. Hon'ble Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasadji, the leader of the youth of our country, is the first railway Minister since Independence who has presented four historical budget during the tenure of the UPA Government which would be written in golden letters in the history of railway budgets.

A number of concession have been given in fare and without increasing the freight rate railways have shown a pre-dividend cash surplus of Rs. 25000 crore and net revenue of Rs. 18416 core. Post-dividend net surplus of Rs. 13535 crore has been declared.

In the railway budget for 2008-09, the hon'ble Minister of Railways has proposed improvement in ticketing system, passenger amenities and concessions such as increasing concession for elderly women from 30% to 50%. The facility of free monthly season ticket which was being provided to girl students upto class XIIth and to boys upto class Xth has been increased to upto graduation and class XIIth respectively. I am recalling a couplet:-

"Yatra Naryastu Pojayantey-Ramantey Tatra Devata"

That means God remains there where women are respected. The hon'ble Minister Shri Laluji has taken commendable steps for women, girls and students.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shrri Anirudh Prasad *alias* Sadhu Yadav]

Several Systems have been formulated for transportation of goods. A vision 2025 has been formulated for the coming 17 years. The Minister has announced various facilities while paying attention for improving the railway safety, for taking measures for railways protection, for making progress in social welfare, special recruitment drive and employees welfare.

Concession of one rupee per passenger in the fare upto Rs. 50 in the second class sub-urban railway, a concession of 5% in the fare beyond 50 rupees in the same class, 7% in the 1st class AC fare and 4% in the AC IInd class fare have been given. By giving these hefty concessions and that also without increasing the fare, he has proved that through effective and efficient management the progress and safety of the railways can be ensured and the country will go ahead on the path of development. The present railway budget is a pro-people budget as no increase has been made in the freight rates.

The hon'ble Railway Minister has a considerate view towards porters. He has decided to appoint the porters working at railway stations as Gangman and on other group 'D' posts as a one time measure under social welfare scheme after conducting their verification. Families of porters expressed their satisfaction and happiness over this decision by taking out procession and celebrated the occasion in a festive mode of Holi with Gulal and raising the slogans in favour of Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav. This shows the popularity of Shri Lalu Yadavji.

Sir, the hon'ble Minister has proposed to set up new stations with a view to upgrade the services provided by the Indian Railways. Some stations have been upgraded and the work is going on at some others. The work regarding conversion of meter gauge into broad gauge is in progress. He has taken a resolution to implement the commitment made to provide facilities of international level at the stations of metropolitan cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai and Patna etc. The entire nation has been covered under the railway's network.

Sir, through you and on behalf of the people of my constituency Gopalganj in Bihar I would like to urge upon the hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasadji to set up divisional railway office in my constituency Thave, which would provide employment opportunities to the people and would also remove the impediments coming in the way of execution of railway works thereby giving impetus to developmental works in this zone. I request the hon. Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasadji to sanction this proposal and also issue necessary orders for establishment of the divisional railway office.

As part of the measures being taken to upgrade the Indian Railways to international standards, I would suggest that open tickets upto a period of 180 days (6 months) be issued on the lines of undated open air tickets. The passenger could then get his ticket confirmed on phone or internet when the date of travel becomes confirmed. This would facilitate the passengers and the government's revenue earnings would also increase.

Sir, the railway budget by hon'ble Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasadji has been followed by the General Budget by the Finance Minister, Shri Chidambaramji like the coaches follow a railway engine. Both have kept public interest in mind and I support both the railway budget and the general budget wholeheartedly.

I commend the fact that after independence it is hon'ble Lalu Prasadji who has succeeded in touching the hearts of both the general public and the rural masses. Hence, I, on behalf of the people of my constituency, Gopalganj, express my sincere thanks to Shri Lalu Prasadji.

Achievements (2008-2009)

- Historic cash surplus of Rs. 25 thousand crores.
- A surplus of Rs. 69 thousand crore earned during the last four years.
- Operating ratio 16%
- Fund balance increased to Rs. 20,500 crores.

Budget Estimate 2008-2009

	Year 2007-2008	Year 2008-2009
Goods transportation target	790 million tonne	850 million tonne
Total income	Rs. 73 thousand crore	Rs. 82 thousand crore
Annual plan	Rs. 31 thousand crore	Rs. 38 thousand crore

New Passenger Services

- 53 pairs of new trains
- 10 pairs of Garib Raths
- Extension of route of 16 pairs of trains
- Frequency of 11 pairs of trains increased.

Plan related achievements

Plan	2007-2008	2008-2009
New Lines	155 km.	350 km.
Gauge conversion	1,645 km.	2,150 km.
Doubling of tracks	500 km.	1000 km.
Wagons manufactured	14 thousand	20 km.

Reduction in passenger fares in all categories.

- Reduction of one rupee in second class fare upto Rs. 50.
- Reduction of 5 percent in second class fares of more then Rs. 50.
- 2 percent reduction in fare of new designed sleeper, AC-III, Chair Car.
- Reduction in AC-I and AC-II fares.
- Completion of rationalization of AC fares.

Concessions

- Free monthly pass to girl students upto graduation level for going from house to college and back.
- Free monthly pass for students upto class-XII for going from house to school and back.
- Concession in rail fares for senior women citizens raised from 30 percent to 50 percent.
- Free AC-II coach passes for Rajdhani and Shatabdi for Ashok Chakra awardees.
- 50 percent concession in second class fares for AIDS patients.

Facilities for passengers

- Stopping of waste disposal from moving trains within four years.
- Discharge-free toilets in all trains.
- Construction of high level platforms, shelters and foot overbridges at stations.
- Facility of buying railway ticket through mobile phones.
- Implementation of 'Jan Sadharan Ticket Booking Yojana' throughout the country. Unemployed youth to be given agency for sale of tickets.
- Online information about trains.
- LHB division coaches in Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains.
- 'Public Address System' in passenger coaches.
- Arrangement of lift, escalator and multi-level parking at large stations.

Suburban Services

- Sanction to MUTP Phase-2.
- Elevated fully air-conditioned, from Churchgate to Virar in Mumbai.
- 300 new services proposed to be started in Mumbai.

Freight trade

- Reduction in freight charges.
- Completion of the process of rationalization of freight charges.
- 14 percent reduction in freight charges for fly ash.
- 5 percent reduction in freight charges for diesel and petrol.
- Concession in traffic loading from sidings during empty flow increased from 30 to 40 percent.
- Uniform rates for piece-meal traffic.
- Route-wise development scheme for busy routes.
- Manufacture of new design hi-capacity wagons by wagon manufacturers.
- Recruitment of coolies who hold licences to the post of gangman and other class-IV posts.
- Constitution of Minority Cell in Railway Board and all rural railway headquarters.
- More than five thousand OBCs recruited out of the total ten thousand recruitments made for class-IV posts.
- Introduction of Mother-Child Health Express.

Public-Private Partnership

Rs. One lakh invested under PPP in five years;

Rs. 25 thousand crore to be invested under PPP in 2008-2009;

- World class facilities at major stations.
- Joint ventures for opening new manufacturing units.
- Promotion of private container trains.
- New design wagons.
- Construction of bulk and non-bulk terminals.
- Establishment of logistics park.

New manufacturing units and workshops

- Establishment of new rail coach factory in Kerala.
- Establishment of a new wagon rebuilding factory in Garkha.
- Development of Jamalpur factory as a manufacturing unit.
- The railways will run the Mokama and Muzaffarpur wagon factory and carry-out its modernization as well.
- Special land acquisition laws for acquisition of land for railway projects on line of the NHAI.
- Staff to be employed to man all the busy level crossings which are unmanned, at present.
- The provision for DRF increased from 5 thousand 400 crore rupees to seven thousand crore rupees.
- The number of consequential train accidents fell from 234 accidents in 2005-2006 to 194 in 2006-2007.
- Online monitoring of rolling stock.
- ACD would be installed in three more zonal railways.

Rail Safety

- Recruitment of 6 thousand jawans and one thousand sub-inspectors in the RPF.
- Deployment of a special force in ladies compartments.
- Installation of metal detector screening systems and bomb detection and disposal systems at stations.
- Emphasis on modernization of the RPF.

[English]

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): Sir, I rise to express my views on the Railway Budget, 2008-09.

Normally, the Railway Budget should be for the whole of India. It should cater to all parts of the country. Secondly, Indian Railways are a commercial institution. But when we look at the present Budget, I am sorry to find that this is not meant for the whole of our country but it covers some selected portions of our country, particularly the parts from where the Railway Minister or the State Minister for Railways hail.

As you know, in the Western Railway, States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are fast developing States in commerce and industry. In their development, the role of the Indian Railways assumes great importance. But when we look at the present Railway Budget, we feel that instead of satisfying the requirements of these States, the same are ignored.

I can say about my constituency, Kutch of Gujarat. Among all zones of Indian Railways, Western Railway generates more income and in Western Railway, particularly Gandhidham area, yields Rs. 5 crore per day.

Through you, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to consider our longstanding demand which I will be narrating in short.

I would like him to consider one more express train from Mumbai to Bhuj which is our longstanding demand.

There was an Inter City train between Bhuj and Vadodara, but it was discontinued. I would request the hon. Minister to re-start the Bhuj-Vadodara Inter City train, looking to the heavy demand for it by public and particularly by traders and large number of labourers, who have recently settled in Kutch after that devastating earthquake. I would request the hon. Minister to introduce direct trains connecting major ports, that is Visakhapatnam and Kandla and also Kolkata with Kandla. It is our long-standing demand.

It is the long-standing demand of all MPs from Gujarat to shift the Headquarters of Western Railway from Mumbai to Ahmedabad because more than 98 per cent operational area of Western Railway is in Gujarat. It is our long standing demand which has not been fulfilled.

I would also like to know from the hon. Minister, when he replies, about the total number of units of wheel factory, coach factory, wagon factory, axle factory, diesel loco factory, electric loco factory, etc. Where are these situated? According to my information, most of them are in Bihar or in other parts. Moreover, he should also mention in his reply, out of these factories, how many have started production? Are these factories achieving their production target or not? What is the progress of other factories? Why have they not started their production yet? I expect, while replying, hon. Railway Minister should also explain why none of such units has been set up in western region, that is Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan from where Railways generate highest income.

I would also like to request the hon. Railway Minister to give clear explanation, in his reply, on the following important matters and I also wish that he may allow a discussion with him, on these issues, which I am stating in brief. When gauge conversion work of Udaipur-Ahmedabad railway line will be started and completed? When will the gauge conversion work of Ankleswer-Rajpipla; Surendranagar-Dhrangdhra; Ahmedabad-Mehsana-Taranga-Ambaji; Bhavnagar-Mahuva; Bhavnagar-Dhosa-Surendranagar; Dhasha-Jetalsar; Ahmedabad-Botad; Bhavnagar-Tarapur; Khed Bhrahma-Ambaji Via Abu Road lines will be started and completed? When construction of new proposed lines between Viramgam-Sankheswar; Daman-Nasik; Nadiyad-Tarapur; Godhara-Dahod-Indore-Devas; Tarapur-Mehmadavad; Ahmedabad-Khedbrahma-Ambaji; Mehsana-Harij-Radhanpur; Vejalpur-Botad; Rajkot-Jaipur-Marwad lines will commence? None of them has been started. They are only on paper. You are not doing anything.

I would like to know from the hon. Railway Minister when the double stake container facility between Kandla and Bhatinda railway track will be started.

The hon. Railway Minister should call for a discussion on these issues and he should discuss them.

In my constituency some projects are pending, like Railway Over Bridge and Under Bridge; developing railway stations and their beautification and declaring them as model railway station. No progress has been made in this regard. Hon'ble Railway Minister should consider of taking up introduction of new railway lines, increasing their frequencies and extension of railway lines; he should look into issues concerning modernisation of railway workshops at Dahod, Bhavnagar, Vadodara, Surat, Mehsana, Palanpur; train washing lines at Palanpur, Mehsana, Veraval; introducing pantry car and extra 1st AC, 2nd AC, 3rd AC and sleeper coaches in long distance trains.

The hon. Railway Minister, in his reply, should mention as to how many railway workshops are there in Western Railway and their locations; how many railway washing lines are there in Gujarat and their locations; why new washing line is not being introduced in Gujarat as the same has been introduced in Konkan Railway, which has got washing capacity of 22 railway coaches only in 20 minutes. ... *(Interruptions)*

There are many other points. The Members who speaks last never gets enough time to speak. What crime have we committed?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Gadhavi, you can lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Thank you.

*Sir, I rise to express my views on Railway Budget for 2008-09. Normally, the Railway Budget should be for whole India and should cater the needs of all parts of our country.

Secondly, the Indian Railway is a commercial institution.

Sir, when we look to present Railway Budget, it gives a impression that:-

(i) This is not for all parts of our country.

(ii) It favours to selected portions of our country, particularly from where Hon'ble Minister hails *i.e.* Bihar State and some parts of Southern States where from Senior Minister of State for Railway hails,

(iii) In this Budget, there seems gross neglection of the areas from where Railway generates more income.

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*... * This part of the speech was laid on the Table

[Shri P.S. Gadhavi]

Sir, as you know that States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan are fast developing States in commerce and industries, and in its development, role of Indian Railway assumes great importance. But when we look to present Railway Budget, we feel that inspite of satisfying the requirements and needs of these States, the same are ignored.

Sir, I can say about my Constituency i.e. Kutch District (Gujarat) in particular and in general of my State *i.e.* Gujarat that:-

(i) Amongst all zones of Indian Railway, Western Railway generates more income and in Western Railway, Gandhidham Area earns daily income of Rs. 5 crore and more,

(ii) In Western Railway Zone, 98% parts of its operational area is in Gujarat. State, so shre of Gujarat in income of Western Railway is more than 98%.

(iii) One major port Kandla, and other very important minor ports, viz. Mundra, Jamnagar, Okha, Bhavnagar, veraval, Pipavav, Hazira and many other ports, are contributing much in the income generation of Western Railway.

Thus, looking to income generation and large number of ports which are important for import and export of very large quantity of goods, Hon'ble Railway Minister should have considered the demands of Gujarat State and other States in his present Railway Budget, but I am sorry to say that the same has not been done for the reasons best known to Hon'ble Railway Minister.

Sir, through your Honour, I request Hon'ble Railway Minister to consider our long standing genuine demand which are narrated in short as under:-

(i) To consider one more express train from BHUJ to MUMBAI, as traffic on this route is increasing every day

(ii) To re-start BHUJ-VADODARA INTER CiTY EXPRESS TRAIN, which was discontinued. Looking to the heavy demand for it by public and particularly by traders and large number of labourers, who have recently settled in Kutch after devastative earthquake in 2001.

(iii) To introduce direct trains connecting major ports *i.e.* Visakhapatnam and Kolkatta with Major Port Kandla and also direct train from Jagannathpuri to Gandhidham, as large number of people from Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Orissa and Bihar are settled in Gandhidham, Kandla complex.

(iv) To shift Headquarters of Western Railway from Mumbai to Ahmedabad as more than 98% operational area of Western Railway is in Gujarat.

(v) Hon'ble Railway Minister ought to have considered the genuine demand of Gauge Conversion of works, viz.:-

(a) BHUJ-NALIYA Section in Kutch District.

(b) A missing link between PATAN and BHILDI, which is very much important to join Western parts of country with Ahmedabad and important parts in Gujarat.

I would like to know from Hon'ble Railway Minister that in his reply he should explain the total number of units of Wheel Factory, Coach Factory, Wagon Factory, Axle Factory, Diesel Loco Factory, Electric Loco Factory etc., where these are situated? According to my information, most of them are in Bihar. Moreover, he should also mention in his reply that out of these factories, how many have started production, are these factories achieving their production target or not? What is the progress of other factories, why they have not started their production yet? I expect, while replying, Hon'ble Railway Minister should also explain why none of such units have been set up in Western Region *i.e.* Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan from where Railway generates highest income.

I would like to submit that Hon'ble Railway Minister should also pay attention to the following matters, which may be considered very minor for him, but same assumes very great importance for public, which I narrate in brief as under:-

Undue delay in getting permission for pipe lines, below the Railway Track; with the result so many water supply schemes are very badly affected.

I would also like to request Hon'ble Railway Minister to give clear explanation, in his reply on the following

important matters and I also wish that he may allow discussion with him, on these issues, which are narrated as under:-

(1) When Gauge Conversion work of UDAIPUR-AHMEDABAD RAILWAY LINE WILL BE COMPLETED?

(2) When the Gauge Conversion work on the following Railway Lines will be started and be completed:-

(A) Ankleswer-Rajpipla

(B) Surendranagar-Dhrangdhra

(C) Ahmedabad-Mehsana Taranga-Ambaji

(D) Bhavnagar-Mahuva

(E) Bhavnagar-Dhosa-Surendranagar

(F) Dhasha-Jetalsar

(G) Ahmedabad-Botad

(H) Bhavnagar-Tarapur

(I) Khed Bhrahma-Ambaji Via Abu Road

(3) When construction of new proposed lines will be commenced:—

(A) Viramgam-Sankheswar

(B) Daman-Nasik

(C) Nadiyad-Tarapur

(D) Godhara-Dahod-Indore-Devas

(E) Tarapur-Mehmadavad

(F) Ahmedabad-Khedbrahma-Ambaji

(G) Mehsana-Hard-Radhanpur

(H) Vejalpur-Botad

(I) Rajkot-Jaipur-Marwad

I would like to know from Hon'ble Railway Minister when Double Stake Container facility between KANDLA-BHATINDA Railway Track will be started.

Hon'ble Railway should call for discussion to all M.Ps. for problems concerning to Railway in their respective Constituency, viz.:—

(a) Railway Over Bridge and or Under Bridge

(b) To develop Railway Stations and their beautification and declaring them as a Model Railway Station.

(c) Introduction of New Railway Lines, increasing frequencies, and extension of Railway Lines.

(d) Issues concerning to Modernization of Railway Workshops at Dahod, Bhav-Nagar, Vadodara, Surat, Mehsana, Palanpur and at many other places.

(e) Train Washing Lines at Palanpur, Mehsana, Veraval and at other places.

(f) To introduce Pantry Car, and extra 1st AC, 2nd AC, 3rd AC, and Sleeper Coaches in long distance trains.

(g) To augment the facilities of Railway Parcel Services.

(h) To augment the facilities like more sitting Benches, Drinking Water facilities,

Pictogram, Foot-Over-Bridge, Booking Window etc.

I also wish that Hon'ble Railway Minister should also explain in his reply that:-

(a) How many Railway Workshops are in Western Railway Zone and please give their locations?

(b) How many Railway Washing Lines are in Gujarat, and where are these Located?

Why new Washing Line is not being introduced in Gujarat as the same has been introduced in KONKAN RAILWAY, which has got washing capacity of 22 Railway Coaches only in 20 minutes?

I would like to submit through you Sir, that if Railway can plan to dispose of its unused vacant land, and its road side scrap land with public auction, Railway can certainly earn crores of Rupees, which is not being implemented in collusion with some corrupt officials and people of vested interest in it. Sir, repeatedly I am requesting the concerned Railway authorities for disposal of more than 100 acres of most valuable land of old Railway Station at Bhuj (District Kutch, Gujarat), which is being openly encouraged upon by land maphias, but no attention is being paid to my this request.

[Shri P.S. Gadhavi]

I would also like to know whether is it true that the foundation stone of Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) was laid down by Hon'ble Prime Minister, but what is the progress in Western Corridor *i.e.* Mumbai - Delhi and Eastern Corridor i.e. Ludhiana - Kolkata. I would also like to know from Hon'ble Railway Minister about the implementation and progress of his much ambitions Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) Project of Rs. 35,000 Crores.

Is it fact that due to lack of funding, this ambitious DFC Project is getting delayed and with the result due to escalation in cost, this Project may get more delayed?

So, to complete this Project in time, what steps are being envisaged by the Railways?

Sir, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Railway Minister that Somnath-Verawal Broad Gauge Line, though already completed, but waiting for its inauguration, when it will be ultimately inaugurated? Foundation Stone of this Project was laid down by the then Hon'ble Deputy Prime Minister, Shri L.K. Advaniji.

Hon'ble Railway Minister should also explain about the progress of the following Gauge Conversion Lines under Port Connectivity Projects in Gujarat, namely:-

SURAT-HAZIRA

MUNDRA-KANDLA

BHAVNAGAR-ALNG

PORBUNDER-BEDIBUNDAR

Sir, in Gujarat certain Railway Stations were declared as Model Stations. But I am sorry to say that progress on these Model Stations are very slow. I should be obliged if the Hon'ble Railway Minister should speak out about the progress of work made on these Model Stations.

Sir, it is the policy of Railways that when Gauge Conversion takes place from Meter Gauge to Broad Gauge, level of platform requires to be raised or upgraded, but in Saurashtra and in my Constituency *i.e.* Kutch, no such work of upgradation/raising of platform has taken place. Hence, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Railway Minister whether upgradation/raising of platform in these regions is taken care of, or not, while converting from Meter Gauge to Broad Gauge? Please give details on this issue in reply.

I would also like to know from the Hon'ble Railway Minister whether presently Railways are facing acute shortage of wheels and coaches? Please let me know whether they are getting adequate supply of wheels and coaches, or not? According to my Information, the normal life of wheels and coaches is 18 years. Whether very recently, during the tenure of Shri Lalu Prasadji, this life span of wheels and coaches has been increased from 18 years to 25 years? Please mention category-wise life span for use of wheels and coaches. Because, Sir, it is apparent that if these coaches and wheels will be used beyond their normal life span, the chances of accident will increase and it is very serious from the point of view of safety of passengers, which is of utmost importance. Therefore, Sir, it is my allegation that only with a view to show the profit, Hon'ble Railway Minister is playing dangerously with the precious life of passengers by increasing the normal life span of wheels and coaches from 18 years to 25 years.

I would also like to know from Hon'ble Railway Minister that whether he would consider to give relief by way of cut in tariffs for iron-ore exporters, as in the first eight months of 2007-08 fiscal year, Railway has increased the rail freight for iron-ore exports by 44% from Rs. 1.26 per tonne per km. (on April 1, 2007) to Rs. 1.81 per tonne per km. in January, 2008.

On iron-ore exports traffic, Railway has hiked the congestion surcharge to a whopping 60% per tonne with effect from December 1, 2007. Earlier, the congestion surcharge was at 35% per tonne, which was effected from October 1—an increase of 14% points over the 21% surcharge level prevailing till September-end. The 21% congestion surcharge was imposed on iron-ore exporters from April 1, through a notification after the Budget.

Other Surcharges

Apart from the congestion surcharge, iron-ore exporters are also paying busy season surcharge of 7% with effect from October 1, when the Railway had increased the surcharge by one percentage point. Moreover, a terminal charge of Rs. 40 per tonne has been imposed on iron-ore till March 31, 2008, apart from a development charge of 2%. With all these surcharges, for moving one tonne of iron-ore on a 500-km. distance, exporters now have to pay about Rs. 987 compared to the base tariff of Rs. 554. 70 as announced in the Budget.

Whether Hon'ble Railway Minister will explain that in the name of Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF), which is meant to be levied only for the specific purpose of raising funds for asset renewal, the same are being collected continuously.

The Chairman of the Standing Committee on Railway has also observed to the effect that "Converting the safety surcharge into a development charge is an indirect way to earn revenues. It raises questions of propriety considering the fact that it was not mentioned in the last Rail Budget speech. While the Railway make claims of having reduced fares, they are indulging in deceptive practices like these," he said, adding that the Committee had specifically recommended withdrawal of this charge and sought an Action Taken Report from the Ministry.

I hope and expect that Hon'ble Railway Minister should consider my few suggestions as stated above very positively. I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to express my views on Railway Budget of 2008-09.*

[Translation]

*SHRI HARIBHAU JAWALE (Jalgaon): Sir, I am giving my following demands in writing on the Railway Budget for 2008-09. Kindly grant them your approval.

1. A new train Amravati-Mumbai Express is going to be run twice a week. Kindly, run it on all seven days and add to it one AC-III tier, two sleeper coaches and two general coaches from Bhusawal.

2. The surcharge levied on super fast trains should be rolled back.

3. Stoppages of Mangla Express and Goa Express should be provided at Jalgaon in Maharashtra and of Kamayani Express and Mahanagari Express at Raver station.

4. Rakes should be made available on priority for transportation of fertilizers.

5. Hon'ble Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Kalmadi had inaugurated conversion of narrow gauge line Pachora-Jamner in Maharastra into broad gauge and its extension upto Malkapur on 16.02.1996 but no work has been started yet. This work may please be started immediately.

6. Seating arrangements and roof shading should be increased for passengers at the platforms at Bhusawal, Jalgaon and Daund stations.

7. Farmers of my parliamentary constituency send thousands of metric tonnes of bananas to U.P. and Delhi every year. But, nine wagons in three rakes went empty two months ago due to shortage of bananas. After that, the Railway Department cancelled the discount of fifty rupees in the freight for farmers and sent notice to the farmers to deposit Rs. 14.5 lakh. Thereafter, the farmers and the traders refused to comply with the notice and stopped sending bananas through railway. Their contention was that the cancellation charges for the empty nine wagons should not be taken from them.

I, therefore, urge the hon'ble Railway Minister that the penal action against the banana producing farmers should be cancelled and they should be provided relief so that the farmers start sending banana through the railways again.

SHRI DEVWRAT SINGH (Rajnandgaon): Hon'ble Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I support the railway budget and the demands for grants presented before the House by the hon'ble Railway Minister. Through you, I would like to say in the House that not only India but the whole world's eyes are on the rail budget presented in the House for the fifth consecutive year by Lalu Prasadji. The Indian Railways and the railway lines are largest not only in India but in the whole world. And the credit for running this railway system smoothly and turning it into a profit earning entity goes to Lalu Prasadji. The Government definitely deserves accolades for this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I thank the UPA Government which is working for the welfare of the common man under the leadership of hon'ble Sonia Gandhiji, Dr. Manmohan Singhji and Shri Lalu Prasadji and it is being reflected in this railway budget. Today, Indian Railways has become the lifeline of every Indian. Crores of people in the country depend on the railways and a very significant time of their life is spent in the trains everyday. Today, we are watching major changes in the railways. Though our friends in NDA are opposing it but by doing so they are just fulfilling their duty that they have to oppose it in the House and that is why they are opposing it. They also agree that revolutionary changes have taken place in the Indian Railways in the last 4 years, be it facilities, safety or cleanliness. This budget is not some tricky game of figures as is being said here repeatedly.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do you have any demand for your constituency?

*Speech was laid on the Table.

SHRI DEVWRAT SINGH: Sir, it was definitely very difficult to make profit but we have done it. Through you, I would like to say two-three things. It is definitely a great step to provide online reservation and reservation through mobile. I want to congratulate and thank hon'ble Minister that revolutionary work has been done in my parliamentary constituency Rajnandgaon. I had requested hon'ble Railway Minister and the Minister of State for Railways Shri Rathwaji for this work. I would like to thank hon'ble Soniaji and the Prime Minister that an order for survey of a new railway line in my constituency has been issued and a provision for the same has been made in this budget. I express my gratitude for that. The railway line from Dongargarh to Kota via Khairagarh, Chhuikhadan, Gandai, Lohara, Kawardha will surely be a revolutionary railway line because there are many natural resources at large scale through which the Railways will benefit a lot. A new train Bilaspur-Pune Express has been started in Chhattisgarh which will be very helpful for our students who study in Pune. Nizamuddin-Bilaspur-Gondwana Express has been extended upto Rajgarh which is also a very good step. There is Ma Bamleshwari Temple in Dongargarh, which is an important segment of my constituency, and which has been given the status of a dream destination on tourism network. I request that the Dongargarh railway station should be made a model station. There is a very big railway ground and it will be very good if a railway stadium is built there. Rajnandgaon is a Parliamentary Constituency and there is a need for expansion of facilities at railway station here. In the Rajnandgaon city, there is need of under bridges at Motipur and Gaurinagar where lines of central railway and south central railway pass.

Expressing gratitude to the hon. Minister for conducting survey of a new railway line in Chhattisgarh, I would like to say that a Sampark Kranti Express runs from our place to Delhi and is named as Chhattisgarh Sampark Kranti Express. It will create a goodwill among the people of my constituency if this train is renamed as Satnam Sampark Kranti Express after the name of the revered saint Guru Ghasidas of our area. Constant efforts are needed for extension of railway facilities and I thank the hon. Minister for the demands for grants presented by him in the railway budget.

*Sir, Ministry of Tourism has put Dongargarh on the world map by including it in eco-tourism. There is need for wide ranging changes in the Dongargarh railway station for providing hassle free travel facilities to the tourists and stoppages of important and long distance trains so that more and more tourists are attracted to visit Ma Bamleshwari Devi Temple in Dongargarh.

Navratra fair is organized twice a year (in Chaitra and Kwar) at Ma Bamleshwari Devi Temple and 8 to 10 lakh devotees visit the temple on each occasion. Railway administration provides stoppages of superfast trains and extends local trains upto Dongargarh temporarily during Navratras for facilitating devotees. But thousands of devotees visiting Dongargarh everyday do not get any such facility and they face a lot of inconvenience. I, therefore, urge you that urgent attention must be paid to the following demands for providing proper travel facilities to the tourists visiting Dongargarh:

1. Durg-Ambikapur Express train should be run from Dongargarh.
2. Durg-Amarkantak Express train should be run from Dongargarh.
3. Maharashtra Express between Gondia and Kolhapur should be run from Dongargarh as this train connects many religious places of Maharashtra with the religious city Dongargarh. Therefore, it is very important to run this train from Dongargarh from religious point of view.
4. It has already been announced to run Sarnath Express, which runs from Durg to Chhapra, from Dongargarh but it has not been implemented till date. This train connects many important religious places of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh with the religious city Dongargarh. Therefore, it is very important to run this train from Dongargarh for the tourists.
5. Gondia-Ramtek Passenger should be run from Dongargarh so that important religious place Ramtek can be connected directly with Dongargarh.
6. Gondia-Chandrapur Passenger train should be run from Dongargarh so that the tourists from Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh are also able to travel to Dongargarh smoothly.
7. Temporary stoppage of the following trains is provided at Dongargarh during fair time. These trains should be provided stoppage at Dongargarh on regular basis for the benefit of the tourists:

   (a) Mahamaya Express

   (b) Azad Hind Express

... This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

(c) Puri Jodhpur Express

(d) Bilaspur-Chennai Express

8. For providing facilities to the tourists the following trains which are extended to Dongargarh temporarily during the fair, should be run from Dongargarh on regular basis:

(a) Bilaspur-Raipur local train

(b) Tumsar-Tiroda Passenger train

(c) Local train from Nagpur to Gondia

9. The Ministry of Tourism has accorded the status of tourist centre to Dongargarh under Eco-Tourism. Keeping this in view, the following facilities should be restored at Dongargarh:

(a) Dongargarh railway station should be provided facility of a terminal, which it had earlier.

(b) Relief train should be established at Dongargarh again.

(c) The changing of Guards in trains at Dongargarh should be kept as it is. It is learnt that this facility is being removed from Dongargarh which would not be proper from the point of view of tourism.

10. There is urgent need for construction of a new foot over bridge as the old bridge is very narrow and hinders the movement.

11. Fair tax is taken from the passengers during the Fair while no other religious place has such tax. Therefore, Dongargarh should also be exempted from the Fair tax like other religious places.

The Ministry of Tourism has put Dongargarh on the world tourism map by including it in eco-tourism which will definitely increase the number of tourists going there. The Central Government has already allocated funds for development of tourism in Dongargarh and various works for the facility of tourists are going to be started soon by the Tourism Department.

Therefore, I request you to take action urgently on the said demands to provide faster, smoother travel to the tourists in accordance with the demands of the Trust.

[English]

SHRIMATI C.S. SUJATHA (Mavelikara): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in this discussion.

I congratulate the hon. Minister Laluji and his colleagues for presenting a more people-friendly Budget this time. I thank him especially for the measures he proposed for the women passengers. It is a welcome step to absorb the railway porters as Class IV employees. I also take the opportunity to express my gratitude to the hon. Minister for considering Kerala for the setting up of a Coach Factory. I hope the Minister will take appropriate measures to begin the work on the project without delays and a time-frame may be set for the completion of the work.

Formation of a new Railway Zone is a long pending demand of the people of Kerala. I repeat the demand once again in the House. Creation of a new zone comprising the areas of the South West Coast would definitely help achieve the required railway development in this region including the State of Kerala, giving momentum to its economic development too.

Sir, I congratulate the hon. Minister for converting the Railways into a profit-making public sector institution. I also congratulate the entire staff of our Railways for the great achievement because without the sincere and honest work of these sections this could not have been possible.

However, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to certain problems faced by a section of railway workers. Now there is an increased tendency in outsourcing the work to private contractors. These contract workers are not given any facilities and there is no job security either. Every new contractor changes the staff thus leaving the earlier workers out of job. Out sourcing must be stopped and all contract workers must be absorbed as permanent employees.

The issue of doubling of line is not being addressed satisfactorily. It is the most urgent work. It has to be done and also the electrification, computerisation, opening of information centres, touch screen facilities, increasing platform length, construction of ROBs, platform shelters etc. have to be taken up.

The doubling work in the Ernakulam-Kayamkulam sector via Kottayam has to be expedited by providing

[Smt. C.S. Sujatha]

adequate funds. The work is moving at a snail's pace. The Railways must take steps to ensure the completion of the work without further delay. The Ministry allocated funds towards doubling only up to Ambalappuzha. This has to be enhanced for the entire stretch. Also the track doubling of the sectors Mangalapuram-Shornur and Thiruvananthapuram-Kanyakumari should be simultaneously taken up.

The completion of Vallarpadam Container Terminal would result in increase in the freight movement. In order to cater to the increased freight and to avoid traffic congestion, the Railways should consider the extension of Kuttippuram-Guruvayoor line to Edappally. A new rail line from Chengannur to Thiruvananthapuram via Pandalam-Adoor-Kottarakkara and Kilimanoor would be economically and commercially beneficial. Chengannur is the centre point to many of the pilgrim centres of Central Travancore. Among them Sabarimala is the most important, attracting millions of pilgrims every year. These pilgrims from in and outside the State depend on mainly the station at Chengannur. But the present facilities at the station are inadequate to cater to their requirements. Therefore, sufficient funds may be allocated to the upgradation of this station and its facilities. The proposed Chengannur-Sabarimala line should be extended to Thiruvananthapuram. Kayamkulam Station is an important station in Central Kerala. This station had been declared as a Junction during the tenure of the NDA Government, but no funds were allocated for the same. The station still suffers due to lack of infrastructure and other facilities. Therefore, funds should be allocated to further upgradation of this station and also steps may be taken to allow stoppage of all trains passing through this station at Kayamkulam.

Since the number of local passengers is increasing rapidly, the Railways should consider MEMU services in the cities and for this purpose, a separate line dedicated to MEMU should be laid in order to avoid traffic congestion in the present lines. I also demand that stops for the new trains proposed in the Budget at important stations like Kayamkulam, Chengannur, Mavelikkara and Thiruvalla besides providing stoppage for Sabari Express at Mavelikkara. *Garib Rath* does not stop at any stations in Alappuzha district and Pathanamthitta. Therefore, stoppage should be provided in this train at Kayamkulam, Chengannur and Thiruvalla.

I would like to make an important suggestion to the Railways. There are about 40 acres of railway land lying vacant adjacent to Cheriyanad Station. This land could be used for establishing a railway production unit. Since water and other resources are easily available in this area, I would request the Minister to consider setting up of a Rail Neer Factory at this site.

Sir, it is also necessary to increase the number of Second Class coaches in the present trains to accommodate the increasing number of passengers. In the previous Budget, there was a proposal for setting up of a Bogie Building Unit at Alappuzha.

But so far no action has been taken to begin this work. Therefore, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to take immediate measures for the commencement of this project.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

*SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNIAH (Tumkur): Sir, the Railway Budget presented by the Hon'ble Railway Minister is an unfortunate Budget as far as Karnataka is concerned. While awarding Railway projects and allocation of funds to Railway projects Karnataka has been totally neglected in this Railway Budget. Inter connectivity within the state has not been given proper attention and importance.

The Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadavji has announced various steps for the benefit of passengers, including free passes for students and concession for senior citizens. But all these seem to have been done with an eye on the 2009 elections. A seven percent cut in AC-I class fare, four percent cut in AC-II class fares and five percent reduction in second sleeper fares is discriminatory. This should have been in the reverse order.

Reducing the fares, announcing free passes for students and various other concessions are welcome. But unless the frequency of services are increased no purpose will be served by these concessions.

Sir, doubling of the Yaswantpur-Tumkur railway line was announced during the year 1991, when Shri Jafar Sharif Ji was in the helm of affairs. But this work is yet to be completed. The work is going on at a snail's pace and it has created lots of inconvenience to the people.

*English translation of the speech originally laid on the Table in Kannada.

So this work should be completed as early as possible. Despite my repeated requests the Railways has not taken up the electrification work of Tumkur-Yaswantpur railway line. Since Tumkur is only 70 Kms. away from Bangalore the number of travellers in this route has been increasing gradually.

Near Upparahalli in Tumkur a R.O.B should be constructed for the convenience of 50 thousand people living in this part of the city. Both the old and new lay cuts of the city are very much crowded. A Barrier should be installed next to Kyatsandra railway station as large number of public including students use to cross railway line there. It would help the public and avoid accidents.

Passengers amenities should be provided at the Mallasandra Railway Station. Safety and security should be given priority at this railway station.

All the railway stations situated between Yaswantpur-Tumkur-Arasikere should be made 'Model' stations. Gates should be constructed at all the railway crossings. Number of passengers travelling between Banasandra and Tumkur is also increasing. That is why more trains should introduced in this route.

Apart from this, at least 4 more general bogies should be attached to the Karnataka Express trains running between New Delhi and Bangalore city. As far as the ambitious Bangalore Metro Rail Project is concerned the progress of work is very slow due to lack of funds. Hence more funds should be released to speed up this project.

I hope the Hon'ble Railway Minister would consider all these genuine demands of my people and I also urge upon the Railway Minister to take necessary steps to complete all these projects without further delay.

[English]

*SHRI AMITAVA NANDY (Dumdum): Sir, I would like to Submit the following demands for consideration by the Railway Minister—(a) The urgent need to take over by the Railways the two Wagon Manufacturing Units of West Bengal-(i) Braithwaite and (ii) Burn Standard (Howrarh and Burnpur).

Proposed Works on Eastern Railway

1. Expansion of Kanchrapara Workshop: It is a well known fact that Kanchrapara Workshop served as an important repairing shop for E.Rly. for more than four decades and was never bothered by the Railway authority to utilize its available infrastructure for Fabrication of Coaches by modernizing the workshop, where plenty of land is available for such expansion.

   Laluji should consider that Budget should not ignore the genuine demand of Bengal and consider the demand.

   I request Railway Ministry to consider this and fund for the same be allotted in this budget.

2. Provision of a New Railway track from Basirhat to Nyajahat: A new railway track from Basirhat to Nyajahat is needed to cater the demand of Sunderban area who are deprived from a speedier and easy means of conveyance. The demand was earlier placed in the standing committee meeting.

3. Increasing the frequency of Service and provision of New Trains:

   (i) Frequency of local EMU Suberban trains from North and South of Sealdah Division.

   (ii) 12 coaches EMU trains requires to be provided in these section for the benefit of the daily commuters in these section.

   (iii) Dum Dum and New Garia are to be considered as Subarban Train Terminal.

   (iv) Kolkata Stn. to be used as Terminal Station for all Superfast.

   (v) Trains.

   (vi) Railway Hospitals and Dispensaries are requires to be renovated and

   (vii) Railway quarters in Sealdah Division are requires to be renovated and modernized.

   (viii) Improvement and Modernisation of Dispersal System at Dum Dum Junction:

   G.M. Eastern Railway himself along with his official visited the Station and experienced the problems facing by the Lacs of Passengers.

   (ix) Reconstruction and widening of Railway Bridge at Sealdah - Ranaghat section of Eastern Railway near 30 A bus stand and Bediapara.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Amitava Nandy]

(x) Widening of Bediapara underpassage towards Metro Car shed.

(xi) Upgradation of dispersal system at Dum Dum Rly. Stn.

(xii) Expansion of under - pass at Kancharapara near Kancharapara workshop.

(xiii) Introduction of new EMU Coach for suburban passengers for two each for Sealdah North, South and Howrah.

(xiv) Introduction of New Rly. Lines from Budge Budge to Falta SEZ.

(xv) To declare Raniganj and Bishnupur as Model Rly. Stn. and gauge conversion of Krishnanagar to Chatapara.

(xvi) Introduction of New Rly. Line from Suri to Prantik Rly. Stn.

(xvii) Hawkers of Eastern and S.E Rly. are to be declared as authorized Hawkers through introducing a pilot scheme.

(xviii) More trains are to be provided to Kolkata Stn.

(xix) Kanchrapara workshop to be expanded for manufacturing EMU Coaches.

(xx) Downsizing in the Railway to be stopped and employment scope should be increased.

(xxi) Railway should use Solar Power for lighting in the Railway Stns. As an alternative source of energy.

(xxii) Dum Dum Stn. and Bidhanagar Stn. Should be connected to Kolkata Stn. by Elevated Fly over.

(xxiii) Safety of the ladies compartment to be increased by posting Lady Security Personnel.

(xxiv) Balihalt-Rajchandrapur to be connected with Hindmotor or Konnagar through a new line.

(xxv) Introduction of New Rly. line from Bidhannagar to Haroa through Lake town—Rajarhat (New Town).

*SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): It is happy occasion where a Budget without taxing passengers and freight movement has been proposed. The trend of the Budget is to improve the facilities and to modernize the infrastructure which is a welcome step.

The declaration that the waste from Toilets will be removed using modern technique is the need of modern India. It is not advisable to continue the old method of distributing such waste throughout the rail track.

The state of Kerala was offered a Couch Factory long time ago. It was later established in Punjab. It is a welcome step that the Budget has declared a Couch Factory in kerala where the state Govt. has offered over thousand acres of land. It would have been better if a provision for the same was made in the Budget which may now be made in the supplementary Budget.

Southern Railway is the second largest zone in India. It needs to be bifurcated. The long standing demand for a West Court Zone with HQ in Ernakulam where enough faculties can be provided.

Though the Budget has given a declaration about same studies regarding new Railway Corridors, it is not clear whether the Govt. has started thinking of fast trains with speed of around 300-350 kms. per hour, which is necessary for a developing large Nation like India. It will be of great necessity to start fast Passenger Rail Corridors. A line from MUMBAI to KANYAKUMARI tjrpigj the Western Coast touching Goa, Mangalore, Kozlikode, kochi, Triuandrum may be taken up as a pilot project as freight Corridors from west to east (MUMBAI-DELHI) and to Calcutta has already been declared.

Kerala is a state with high density necessitating more travel facilities to all major cities and towns in India. Through some steps have been taken in this regard, a train to PUNE and JAIPUR through same areas of frequent demand from Kerala are necessary. Similarly it is of utomost necessity to extent the H.N 12 AMUDIEXI-ERNAKULAM Manglu Exp. to TRIUANDRUM.

Kochuveli in Trivandrum is a developing destination. However a lot of developments are to come up in KOCHUVILI railway Station. Till then it is necessary that all trains to and from KOCHUVELI be extended to TRIVANDRUM Central Railway Station.

In Kerala the most important need is to complete the doubling of Railway line from North to South. Unless more amounts are sanctioned the which state will be covered by this facility. I request that money necessary

*Speech was laid on the Table.

to complete doubling work so as to leave no length of line is necessary.

A doctor in a Train is a necessity in long distance Trains. I request that this facility be introduced soon.

A new line connecting kerala and Karnataka from Malabar area is an urgent necessity. It's connectivity to Chamakya nagar from Malabar area of Kerala is made the whole state of Kerala will be benefited to travel to Banglore and other areas of Karnataka. This will open up a new way towards North India also. It is a sorry fact that the Budget has forgotten this most important demand.

I hope the Hon. Railway Minister will fill up the above gaps in his reply speech and in this Supplementary Budget to come.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN (Bhagalpur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I was listening to the speech of the hon'ble Minister of Railways. Large sized advertisements appeared in the newspapers, the people were expecting something great. But the rail budget proved to be a damp squib. So far I have not seen such a bad budget. ...*(Interruptions)* Katihar was my old constituency. I was an M.P. from Kishanganj-Arariya belt. I had attended the foundation stone laying ceremony of a railway line over there and the work on the said line started during our regime. Though the line has not been laid so far yet he has announced a train from Jogbani to Delhi. When asked as to by when the train will start, it was said that it will start after four years. The budget has been presented in such a way as if they will be in power for next 10 years. Rail budget is only for a year. Perhaps some astrologer has told him that he will be the Minister of Railways for long. Annual plans are presented in the rail budget. For the first time in a rail budget, we see that the minister has announced reduced fare for traveling in the specially designed coaches which are likely to roll out after five years. The Minister has presented the budget keeping next election in mind and he has presented day dreams. I know that he is handling the railway, the way he handled Bihar. Everybody knows how bad future the railway has. I undertake few train journeys and generally travel by air as I have been a Minister of Civil Aviation thus get more opportunities to travel by air. ...*(Interruptions)* Once while traveling from Bhagalpur to Kolkata, caterers served me meals. I kept the packed meals beneath the seat, thinking I will eat it later on as while staying in Delhi I developed a habit of eating late. After some time when I picked the packet only to know that a rat had eaten from it. We find rats in each bogie as no attention is paid for sanitation. Bad covers and pillow covers supplied in the trains smell foul. Only Minister's saloon is kept clean and tidy. It will be good if the hon'ble Members are allowed to travel in that.

While traveling in Punjab Mail, I saw cockroaches in the bogies. Of course, I am not afraid of cockroaches but women passengers in that bogie could not sleep throughout the night. They were of the view that attention should be paid towards sanitation in trains.

The hon'ble Minister said that railways has earned huge profit. But how? The existing railway tracks are being used beyond their capacity, so tracks will get weakened. When we construct a road we also assess its load bearing capacity. If NH level vehicles are plied on a road constructed under PMGSY, the road will get damaged. The present tracks are unable to bear the present traffic load. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Silence please. Do not waste the time of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN: Sir, he is my friend and he has come to encourage me and the more he comments the more I will speak. So it is better he keeps silent, otherwise I will lay my speech. I expect that the hon'ble Minister is representing entire Bihar. He should have sanctioned projects for entire Bihar, whereas, he has either concentrated everything in Chhapra, or he has sanctioned one station, that is under hon'ble Ramkripal Ji's constituency. All the four rail factories have been set up in Chhapra whereas, he should have set up them at different locations, such as one in Bhagalpur, one in Muzaffarpur and elsewhere. But he has allocated all the four to Chhapra. Self praise will not do, he should pay attention to sanitation also. We claim that we will become a developed nation, but have we developed any station during last five years properly? Now, he says the Ministry will develop mega stations. What is the use now, when the time has run out. Now, they are on the verge of going, they are packing their luggage. ...*(Interruptions)* And there is no harm in packing the luggage? It is a run up to the election. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please sit down. Nothing should be recorded except Shri Shahnawaz Hussain.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, now the elections are near. Naugachhiya station falls under his constituency. Rajdhani Express does not stop there. He has good influence and the Railway Minister listens to him, so, if Rajdhani Express is provided a stoppage at Naugachhiya, it will benefit me also and often I go there, though he goes there once a while. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not disturb. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN: Sir, I want him to cooperate with me. My speech is a compassionate one and I am not sarcastic. It is opposition's duty to awaken the government and I am here like a sentinel of Bihar.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing should be recorded except Shri Shahnawaz Hussain.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN: Sir, through you, I would like to urge the hon'ble Minister to construct a mega station at Bhagalpur as has been made at Patna, the constituency of Ram Kripalji. They are from the same party. If the hon'ble Minister loves him, I am not jealous of it, but he should provide Rajdhani Express and Garib Rath to my constituency also. If I have won election from there, it does not mean that he will be annoyed with 30 lakh people of my constituency. Victory or defeat in election is a normal process. He should have a great heart. Therefore, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister. He likes me a lot and I know that by heart he may be very happy over my victory in elections and I have good relations with him but these relations have failed to reflect in the Rail Budget. I have been the youngest MP from Bihar, therefore, I could get his love and affection. But the budget is politically biased. Nothing has been given to my constituency. Then I lodge my protest and put the demands of my constituency. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let Hussainji speak. Nothing should be recorded except Shri Shahnawaz Hussain's speech.

SHRI SYED SHAHNAWAZ HUSSAIN: Sir, my submission is that attention should be paid toward sanitation. Pay attention to Kantiji's constituency also. Since she is a Minister, she cannot make any demand. My submission is that attention should be paid to my constituency also and I lay my remaining speech.

*I rise to present my views on railway budget and I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. On one hand the hon'ble Minister of Railways is projecting this budget as a historical and people friendly but on the other hand being a Member of Parliament from Bihar, he is claiming that this budget will boost development in Bihar and provide more and more railway facilities to the people of the state. It seems that this budget is like an election manifesto of his party in which number of commitments have been made to mislead the people with pre-determination in the mind not to implement them. These promises have been included in the manifesto just to delude the people. Fares have not been reduced in the budget rather these have been increased by Rs. 150-200 per ticket by transferring more than half of the seats under "Tatkal Sewa". Some trains have been announced for the places where even railway lines have not been laid. Some rail factories have been proposed in those areas of Bihar where railway lines have not been laid so far. He has announced setting up of railway factories in Bihar but these are confined to his own area only. Earlier he was recognized as a leader of Bihar but now he has confined himself to Chhapra only. He may be remembering a major train accident took place last year at Bhagalpur in which large number of people lost their lives. At that

*Not recorded.

*... * This part of the Speech was laid on the Table.

time also we were expecting that attention would be paid towards Bhagalpur. I have been raising my voice for the development of Bhagalpur and met him a number of times in this regard. But it seems that he wants to take revenge of his party's defeat in the Lok Sabha by-elections to BJP from 30 lakh people of Bhagalpur. That is why Bhagalpur has been ignored completely in this railway budget. Ministers make announcements on behalf of the Government. On visiting Bhagalpur he had made an announcement to set up DRM office there but this budget has also disappointed us in this regard.

Sir, he may be remembering that in December, 2007 I had written a letter to him demanding that in the absence of basic amenities at railway stations in my Parliamentary Constituency Bhagalpur, people of this area are facing many problems. These demands are:

(a) Direct train for Punjab, Rajasthan via Bhagapur-Kiul.

(b) Enrouting any of Delhi bound Howrah-Syaldah-Guwahati Rajdhani Express trains through Bhagalpur.

(c) According the staus of model station to Navgachhiya Station and providing halt to Rajdhani Express, Yashwantpur Express and North East Express trains at this station.

(d) Similarly, Bhagalpur-Sultanganj Paripanti and Kahalgaon stations should also be declared as model stations and basic passenger amenities should be provided at these stations.

(e) A Garib Rath should be introduced from Bhagapur to Delhi.

(f) Weekly Express train between Bhagalpur and Delhi should be made a daily train.

(g) Railway line between Jamalpur and Hawrah is in dilapidated condition. Several bridges have sinked in causing suspension of railway services for months. Besides, this section has not been electrified and track has also not been developed. All the bridges between Jamalpur and Hawarah should be rebuilt.

In December, 2007 when I had sent this letter of demand to him, I had also suggested to include these demands in the coming budget and make efforts to fulfil them. At that time I was under the impression that as he is from Bihar he would do the needful for the development of the state. However, no attention has been paid to it in the current budget. Not only injustice has been done to my Parliamentary Constituency Bhagalpur but it also put a question mark to the claims he has made for Bihar. It is a hub of industrial and commercial activities and 'Vikramshila' a famous ancient university is also located there. Therefore, there is a lot of potential for tourism and can be a means of earning foreign exchange for the country.

I would like to mention that after Patna, Bhagalpur which is famous for 'Resham' (Silk), is the second biggest city of Bihar. It is being neglected out of political ill will. It was never expected from him and the people have felt this injustice. He is presenting the last budget of his tenure and I hope that when our Government will come to power. Justice would definitely be done to us.*

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, will the copy of the speeches, which are laid on the Table, go to the concerned Minister?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Definitely, he will read it.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : I am laying my speech on the Table.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay it.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly): Mr. Deputy speaker, sir, I would like you to direct the hon'ble Minister to send replies to the members regarding action taken on their speeches laid on the Table.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I cannot compel; sorry.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: No reply has never been received till now.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, you have been given assurance that reply would be sent. Instead I compelled by me, the hon'ble Minister has suo-moto given assurance.

*SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH (Damoh): Mr. Speaker Sir, through you, I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister of Railways, to revise the budget and sanction the funds for Damoh-Kundalpur new rail line for which survey has been completed with an expenditure of about 49 crore rupees.

2. That the survey for Jabalpur-Damoh-Panna route has been completed but the Ministry of Railways has not provided any funds for it in this budget due to politics. If this project is covered in this budget then the distance between Jabalpur and Damoh will be reduced from 200 kms. to 100 kms. and the distance of Panna from Damoh will be reduced by 150 kms. which is presently 300 kms. via Katni and Satna. I, therefore, request you to provide funds for it in the revised budget in larger public interest.

3. If the forest department is not giving 'No Objection Certificate' (NOC) due to reserve forest situated on the proposed Damoh-Punna rail route, then this line should be connected to Damoh-Khajuraho line so that the distance between Damoh and Khajuraho, a tourist spot, is reduced and the iron being transported from Jatashankar by trucks may be transported by the train and the railways will earn good revenue therefrom. Hence the survey of Damoh-Khajuraho rail route should be carried out in place of Damoh-Punna rail route and it should be covered in the next budget.

4. The funds sanctioned every year for Lalitpur-Singrauli railway line are like a drop in the ocean. This project was started in 1993 with a project cost of 990 crore rupees but this project can't be completed even in 25 years, if only 40 crore rupees are sanctioned every year. The present situation will make the project cost 2000 crore rupees and even then it will not be possible to complete this project in fifty years.

5. The stoppage of Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express, Jabalpur-Jaipur Express and Jabalpur-Jammu Express should hs provided at Patharia.

6. A VIP waiting room should be constructed at Damoh station.

7. A ticket booking counter should be set up at Golapatti and Ratangaon station.

8. The stoppage of Chhattisgarh Sampark Kranti should be provided at Damoh and Sagar.

9. An ATM should be provided at Damoh Railway Station.

10. Jabalpur-Jammu Tawi Express should be run on four days a week in place of once a week and this train should be extended upto Udhampur so that the jawans from Jabalpur and Sagar may reach Udhampur smoothly.

11. A 1st Class AC coach should be attached to Gondwana Express 2412 and 2411.

12. The existing quota of reservation at Damoh railway station should be doubled.

13. The passenger train running between Damoh and Bina should be extended upto Bhopal.

14. Revanchal Express and overnight trains should be extended from Bhopal upto Indore.

15. Shipra Express should be made a daily train.

16. Rajkot Express should be run on three days in place of two days a week.

17. The stoppage of Vindhyachal Express should be provided a stoppage at Ghatera and Sagauni.

18. Bilaspur Rajdhani should go to Raipur via Sagar, Damoh and Katni and stop at Anooppur Bilaspur and its name should be changed as Raipur Rajdhani.

19. Lalitpur-Singrauli rail line should be allowed to be constructed through Panna, Gangau National Park.

20. Damoh railway goods platform should be made a full rake pont in place of half rake pont so that full rail wagons of food and green and lime stone could be unloaded and loaded.

21. An overbridge has been constructed at Patharia level crossing in Damoh. A foot overbridge should be constructed at Patharia Marg.

22. Amarkantak Express should run via Sagar-Bina so that the passengers of Damoh-Sagar may get an additional train for Bhopal. Hence this train should run via Damoh-Sagar-Bina three days a week.

23. Bhopal-Bilaspur Express reaches Bilaspur at 5 a.m. and remain stationed there whole day. This train should be extended upto Durg. It would benefit the public and the railways would not be required to provide an additional train.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

24. Jabalpur-Nagpur Express runs on three days a week and remains stationed at Nagpur. This train should be extended upto Bangalore.

I, therefore, request you to fulfill the above mentioned demands in larger public interest.

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, it seems to me that the hon'ble Members sitting on my opposite benches have not been able to find any fault in the rail budget. About half a dozen leaders of BJP have only one complaint that the rats are always seen running at railway stations or in the trains. Perhaps these hon'ble Members have been tutored to recite this fact. BJP is a party which can feed milk to Ganeshji and now it seems that after Ganeshji and God a rat would be included in their angenda for victory.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You should speak on behalf of your party. You have got only five minutes to speak.

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV: It would have been a logical statement had hon'ble Shahnawazji said that Laluji has created a minority cell at every zonal level for the minorities for the first time or Laluji has ensured the presence of a member of minority community in any recruitment body or committee of Railway Board. But it's not a question of finding faults only. From a common man to hon'ble Prime Minister, everyone has praised this 'Gudri Ke Lal Dhartiputra' who was born among the cows and buffaloes. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Have you got any demand relating to your constituency?

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV: He has proved this before the entire world that only English speaking people are not competent; infact a villager can also rise to the level where institutions like Howard, Oxford and IIM honour him with the title of Management Guru. Recently, I spoke to a young coolie at Delhi Cantt. Railway Station and told him that now he would be able to get a job, to which he replied that may God give Lalu Prasad Ji a long life, may his children remain blessed and happy and he may progress more and more throughout his life. This is the kind of thinking the people have for him who has provided great relief to the poor people, to the Kulhad makers (potters), Khadi users and dairy product sellers. No word of praise is enough for Lalu Prasad Ji who has a dream to make Indian Railways the number one railways in the world. At present hon'ble Railway Minister is not present in the House, speaking in his presence will seem like. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He is not here.

DR. KARAN SINGH YADAV: it is a big thing to praise someone in his absence. My speech will remain incomplete if I do not speak about the people of my Constituency here. I am very grateful to hon'ble Lalu Prasad Ji for making a provision in the budget to conduct a survey for laying a new railway line from my constituency Bhiwadi to Rewari, introducing a Garib Rath from Jaipur to Chandigarh and doubling the railway line between Alwar and Rewari. These provisions in the Rail Budget were such that the people of my Constituency asked me to make a mention of these things in the House and thank the hon'ble Minister for the same.

I have 2-3 small demands. It has been our long pending demand that a passenger train should be introduced between Jaipur and Delhi via Alwar, Rewari and this train should have stoppage at all the small stations. It should start from Delhi in the morning and return to Delhi in the evening. There is an urgent need for such a train. Some trains running between Rewari and Delhi are called one RD, Second RD, Four RD, Seven RD. If these trains are extended upto my city Alwar, which comes under the National capital region, then it will greatly benefit hundreds and thousands of daily commuters of my constituency who come to Delhi for work. The old train Chetak Express which used to run from Udaipur to Delhi via Jaipur, Alwar and Rewari was a moter gauge train. When this track was converted into broad gauge then this train was run via Phulera, Neem Ka Thana and Namaul. Now this train is being re-introduced but not on its original route which was from Ajmer to Delhi via Jaipur, Alwar and Rewari, infact, it is being run via Neem Ka Thana and Phulera. I would like to urge that this train should be re-introduced and run on its old original route. Due to the railway crossing, the traffic gets disrupted at Khairkal railway station in my constituency thus causing a huge inconvenience to the people. As per the new policy a new railway under bridge should be constructed at this place. There is one more small but important demand which is connected to people's emotions. Rajgarh is the tribal region in my constituency. Since long we have been demanding a stoppage of Ashram Express and Bareily goods train in that tribal region. I would like to say that thousands of scheduled tribe people are working in different parts of the country. Due to reservation a large number of our Meena community people are

[Dr. Karan Singh Yadav]

working in different parts of the country. These major trains do not stop at those places. These trains should have a stoppage at Rajgarh because it is the sub-divisional headquarters.

Besides, there are some other small demands, which I will give in writing. With these words, I conclude my speech with the remark once again that Laluji has established a new record and have taken the railways to new heights. This Budget should be whole heartedly supported. I strongly support this budget.

*I would like to present the following demands of my constituency before hon'ble Railway Minister.

Ashram Express and Bhuj-Bareily Express should have a stoppage at Rajgarh station. At least one pair of train out of the half a dozen RD trains running between Rewari-Delhi should be extended upto Alwar so that the passengers commuting daily from my constituency to Delhi can also be benefited. RUB should be constructed near Khairtal railway station. One passenger train should be introduced between Jaipur-Delhi during the day time. A computerized reservation center should be set up at Rajgarh and Khairtal. Modernisation of Rajgarh railway station should be done. Chetak Express announced in the rail budget should be run on its old route *i.e.* via Jaipur-Alwar and Rewari. 4041/4042 Delhi-Sarai Rohilla, Delhi-Dehradun, Masoori Express should be extended upto Jaipur. Sitting reservation should be made in the Express, Mail and Superfast trains running during the day time. The monthly season ticket for daily passengers should be made for 200 kms. instead of 150 kms. Gauge conversion work of entire Rewari-Sadulpur, Ratangarh-Bikaner line should be expedited so that the meter gauge trains running between Bikaner to Delhi in the past may be restarted on the broad guage line. The passengers coming from Bikaner to Delhi have had to face a lot of difficulties during the last one year.

Rajasthan Sampark Kranti should be made a daily train. There are very few trains on the Mathura-Alwar track, the long distance trains coming to Mathura should be extended upto Jaipur or Rewari via Alwar. Intercity Delhi-Jaisalmer should be given a stoppage at Ajarka. Jaipur-Gwalior Intercity Express should be provided a stoppage at Khedli.*

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

*SHRI VIKRAMBHAI ARJANBHAI MADAM (Jamnagar): Sir, first of all, I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Railway Minister for presenting such a good rail budget for the common people. I am presenting before you a few demands of Gujrat state regarding railway budget:

1. A daily Super-fast passenger train should be introduced between Dwarka, Yatradham and Bandra (Mumbai).

2. A daily Super-fast train should be introduced between Dwarka, Yatradham and New Delhi via Viramgam-Mehsana.

3. Jamnagar Extention should be made a new railway division.

4. Till date there is a single railway line in Saurashtra Extention due to which the public and business class people have to face a lot of problems. Doubling and electrification of railway line between Jamnagar and Ahmedabad should be carried out.

It is extremely important to consider the above demands of Gujarat state for its development.

SHRI RAMKRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given me an opportunity to speak. At the outset, I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister of Railways Shri Lalu Prasadji who has sent a message not only to the country but also across the world by presenting a historical budget. He has presented the fifth budget in a row. Perhaps, sixty years since our independence, he is the first Railway Minister who brought railways to profit without any hike in fares and consequently, railways earned a profit of Rs. 75 thousand crore. The predecessor NDA Government was ready to privatize it and on the basis of Rakesh Mohan Committee the Government planned to privatize it as it was running in loss. It was not in a position to give dividend every year. He has done a historical job. Shri Laluji has taken the railways to new heights. Apart from him, I express my gratitude to 14 lakh employees, officers and even both the Ministers who worked with such a close cooperation. He has created a new identity for himself in the world. Several of our colleagues have rightly said that people are coming from abroad to study Lalu's charisma as to how he turned loss making railways into a profit earning institution. He has done an important job.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

He did not increase the farees even by five percent instead he reduced it and provided relief to the passengers. He has done a great job for students. Poor students were facing difficulty in purchasing tickets as their guardians were unable to afford. Now the hon'ble Minister has announced free travel in trains for female students upto B.A. and upto 12th standard for male students for going to college or school.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is there any demand from your constituency?

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Yes, Sir, it is there.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You will get only five minutes.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I will be grateful if you give me some time. He has done a favour to you. You should thank the hon'ble Minister even on behalf of the Chair as he has done a historical thing by meeting your old demand.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have thanked him several time.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: There is no M.P. whose demand has not been met, but, they are still criticizing in one or the other way. Raiwlays have improved a lot, how can we ignore it. It has decided to upgrade Patna Station to the world class level and also several other stations will be made model stations. Lalu Ji has risen above party politics and he has undertaken certain very good jobs. It is said that many projects have been given to Bihar. Since India's independence minimum investment has not only been made in railways but in other section as well. Because of this reason the people of Bihar, who have no work, are compelled to migrate.

After carving out of Jharkhand from Bihar, the sources of revenue such as mines and minerals have gone to Jharkhand and now we are left with nothing except floods and droughts. In view of it, efforts have been made to compensate this aspect by allotting factories and railway lines. What wrong he has done by doing so? But people feel jealous about it, though, I feel it should not be so. Help should be rendered to the poor state. Still, I would like to urge the hon'ble Minister of Railways, that efforts should be made for development of other backward states also, on the lines of Bihar, though it is not that enough has been done in Bihar. Still a lot is to be done. Still there are areas in Bihar which have no rail network. So a lot is still to be done in Bihar. But, backward states should also be extended benefits. The hon'ble Minister, in his budget speech, has announced something for each state and no state has been left out. Therefore, I feel that Laluji has realized the sentiments, pain of not only Bihar, but of the whole nation and he has given priority to the said pain in the rail budget.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, coolie has become a history and it will be written in golden letters. They feel, only now they have gained independence Laluji made them realize the real feeling of independence by making them Group IV employees. Senior Citizen can now travel to any destination by doling out just half fare. He has, thus, presented one kind of gift to senior citizens. There are many other programmes. ...*(Interruptions)* Now, I come to the demand.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You lay your demands.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I will speak as I have not yet written it down.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You lay on the Table. You have spoken for six minutes.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I will conclude within 2-3 minutes. You are especially kind to me, but I don't know why you are annoyed with me today. Rail Line between Mugalsarai to Kiul is quite busy. In the absence of a third line, traffic does not move smoothly on this line. All the trains, be it express or goods train, pass on these lines only. Our population is growing day by day and therefore the number of passengers is also increasing. During last budget, I requested the hon'ble Minister and now also I urge him to lay a third line between Mugalsarai to Kiul so that traffic can move smoothly and the passengers do not have to face difficulty. Patna-Gaya line is also very busy. It is being doubled. But I feel, certain stretches are yet to be doubled causing great inconveniences to the people.

Sir, Bankaghat falls under my constituency. It is under Vijay Krishna Ji's area also, so it is a common for us. Large number of farmers live in this area. There was a demand for construction of a railway level crossing at this place, but no headway has been made in this regard and that is why the people are facing a lot of problems on this count.

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

My area houses a large number of railway staff. Many staff quarters are located in Danapur where our DRM office is situated. The hon'ble Minister keeps the welfare of the employees in mind but their quarters are in a dilapidated state. The colony is dirty and the roads are in a poor condition. I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards this issue as well. If the quarters cannot be repaired then a new building should be constructed. The Minister has adequate funds at his disposal and has always adopted a favourable approach regarding the railway employees. These are the few request I wished to make and I express gratitude towards the hon'ble Railway Minister. I would like to raise many more points if you give me permission to speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: I will write down those points and lay them on the Table. Reiterating my gratitude towards the Railway Minister, I would like to inform him that work on the railway line sanctioned between Bihta and Aurangabad has not commenced yet. People are being deprived of this facility. Work on the line should be started immediately so that the long standing demand of the people may be fulfilled. Doubling of Rajgir line should be carried-out. With these few requests I express my gratitude and support the rail budget.

*Sir, kindly sanction the following schemes: Construction of road overbridge (ROB) near Sarari Gumti near Jamaluddin Chowk in my constituency Danapur; construction of road overbridge near railway gumti at Shivala Chowk; construction of ROB near Lakhpar railway gumti in Danapur; construction of foot overbridge near Mazar of Jamaluddin Chak in Danapur; survey for railway line between Arah and Mohaniya has been completed and funds should be allocated so that work could be started at the earliest and; trains should be halted at Yahatvaniya that lies between Buxar and Arah.

Sadisopur has been a halt since British times. It should be granted the status of a station. Work should be started expeditiously at Phulwari, Danapur and Patna Sahib stations which have been accorded the status of model stations. Parsa and Bihta should be granted the status of model stations.*

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

**SHRI M. SHIVANNA (Chamrajanagar): Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on Railway Budget 2008-2009 presented by the Hon'ble Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad ji.

At the outset I would like to say as far as Karnataka is concerned it is an unfortunate Budget. The Hon'ble Minister has given top priority to Tamil Nadu and Bihar. This Budget has not rendered justice to all states of the country. I had praised Shri Lalu Prasad ji for his great achievement during previous Budget discussions. But the present Budget clearly shows that the Railway Minister has adopted an anti-Karnataka and anti-Kannadiga stand in awarding railway projects to Karnataka. That is why I would say Lalu Prasad ji is not Management Guru, he is 'Damagement Guru' as far as Karnataka is concerned. During his last visit to Karnataka he had assured us that he would allocate sufficient funds to complete the pending railway projects. We also had hopes to get sufficient funds but in the Budget our hopes and aspirations about railway projects went been fulfilled. He failed to live up to his promises.

India is such a country where we can see the unity of multi lingual, multi-cultured people. All are equal in our country. Therefore being a Railway Minister for the entire country it is his bounden duty to keep all the states in mind while allocating funds in the Budget. There should not be any such discrimination, otherwise it would affect the very unity and integrity of our country.

Sir, in the map of Indian Railways we have to see Karnataka using a microscope, as Karnataka is always meted out with step-motherly treatment. The State Government has requested for 9 new railway lines, 3 gauge conversion projects, and 8 doubling of railway line works. The estimated cost of all these projects is Rs. 5656/-. But this year the Railway Minister has allocated only Rs. 685 crore. Is it possible to complete any Railway Project with this meagre amount. It is not enough even to complete a Single Railway Project in the state. This kind of negligence will lead to further burden on Railways as expenditure of these projects goes up year after year. It would benefit neither Karnataka nor Indian Railways. Therefore atleast in his reply Hon'ble Minister, I hope will announce 1000 crore more funds to complete ongoing Railway Project of Karnataka.

**English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

Sir, we have been demanding these railway projects for the last 15-20 years. Number of railway projects have been sanctioned during the Prime Ministership of our J.D.(S) Party President Shri H.D. Devegowda ji. But so far none of these projects have been completed. For example in the year 1992-93 Bangalore-Hubli and Shimoga-Talaquppa Gauge conversion had been approved. The Government of Karnataka is also sharing 50% of the project cost still it is not completed. Another railway line from Kottur-Harihar is 65 Kms. This railway project has been extended upto Hararanahalli. But work on this project progressing at a snail space. And the long pending railway line between Bangalore-Satyamangalam is another key railway line in the southern part of Karnataka. But so far the Railway Minister has not taken up this project seriously. The entire economy of the South-Western Karnataka will get a big boost if this new railway line is completed. This railway line passes through my parliamentary constituency Chamarajanagar. My parliamentary constituency Chamarajnagar District is one of the most backward districts in the country. Large number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe people, live there. The total estimated cost of this project is Rs. 901.29 crore. In the previous Budget Rs. 1.29 crore had been allocated. In the present Budget only 'One, crore of rupees has been allocated. Sir, this is very unfortunate and painful.

This railway line will be helpful in many ways. It connects Bangalore and Satyamangalam via Harohally-Kanakapura,Sathur-Malanalli Kollegal. Chamarajanagara to Mettupalyam line is pending for the last two decades. Every time a token money is set apart for this project. Unfortunately, there is no progress in this direction. This is a very vital line between Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. Communication between the two states will improve and business will flourish. Unfortunately the Government of India is not taking any interest to complete the very important railway line.

Similarly, Nanjangud to Mysore railway line is the most important line in southern Karnataka. I have visited the spot where the work is expected to be completed by the end of May. I request both the Ministers to come over their to flag off this railway line.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Member, you have already taken more than seven minutes to speak. You can lay your speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Mysore to Bangalore is the most lucrative railway line. It was to be doubled and electrification should also be completed without loosing anytime. I have repeatedly requested the centre regarding this "Life line" of Karnataka.

Sir, Bangalore the capital city of Karnataka, is known as I.T. city, and also Garden city of India. Mysore, the cultural capital of Karnataka, is known as city of palace. Mysore is world famous for its Dussera celebration. It attracts people from all over the world. Mysore is 150 K.M. away from Bangalore. It will take 3 hours to travel from Bangalore to Mysore. Thousands of commuters including office goers, school and college students, business people covering this route are increasing gradually. Nearly 2,000 daily-wage workers, ladies and children are traveling in this route everyday. Adequate number of trains to meet the needs of passengers are not there. Due to heavy rush in all the trains, passengers are facing lot of difficulties. At present only 3 trains are running in this route. Passengers are sitting on the roof of the trains. Therefore, Railway Ministry should take all the necessary steps to increase the number of trains and must add more compartments to the existing trains. I would also like to mention that all the trains should have more stoppage time at Bidadi, Ramanagar, Channapattana, Maddur, Mandya and Pandava Pura. It would be a great help to the passengers. Railway Minister should give necessary instruction to the concerned authorities to provide extended stoppages.

At present there is only one train at 6 AM. There are no trains between 7 AM and 10 AM. In the same way there should be more trains between 4 PM and 7 PM. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to increase the frequency of the trains while and introducing more trains. If possible special trains should be introduced in these route.

*Doubling of Hospet-Kasargod line will play a major role in the economic development of Karnataka. It is through this line that iron ore from the state is being transported to Goa and coal and fertilizers from Goa reach Karnataka. The route is totally 'Saturated' now with over 12 rigs of goods running daily. The project requires Rs. 1000/- crore to complete. Another very important railway line between Mangalore and Chennai via Bangalore and Hasan was announced during the Prime Ministership of Shri H.D. Devegowda. This railway line is

... This part of the speech was laid on the Table

[Shri M. Shivanna]

commercially viable and it would help the Indian Railways to earn more revenue. Another important and strange railway line is between Bangalroe and Jolarpettai. Ironically the line between Jolarpettai and Chennai is double line and it is electrified. The other side of this Major railway line i.e. between Jolarpettai and Bangalore it is neither electrified nor double. What a double standard !!! Will the Hon'ble Minister release at least 100 crores of rupees for the speedy conversion and electrification of the line between Bangalore and Jolarpettai? Silicon city is not only the home town of thousands of software companies but also hosting ATP II tier tennis tournament. Should it not be connected with Chennai by a double line.

The people of Karnataka are happy as their long awaited train was flagged off very recently from Bangalore to Mangalore after 12 long years. This popular train runs through some of the most breath-taking landscape in the western ghats. Regarding this railway line I can say that only a half the job is done as the work of the Bangalore-Shravanabelagola-Hassan line remains incompleted and the Mangala Express is forced to take a circuitous route, making the commuters spend nearly 13 hours journey. I therefore urge upon the Hon'ble Laluji to kindly and expeditiously complete the remaining work so that the train service will be able to realize its full potential. Apart from the night service that it has started now, the railway should immediately consider a day service as well to enable people to enjoy the scenic beauty of terrain the train passes through. It will also make sense from the tourism point of view.

The commercially lucrative doubling of Bangalore-Mysore, the most busy line between Tumkur and Bangalore and the most important railway line between Mysore and Chamarajanagara have to be completed at the earliest. These very important lines have been limping along for years for want of funds. Now time has come to expedite these three vital railway lines without any further delay in Karnataka.

Sir, while recruiting the 'D' group employees people of states concerned should be given priority. I agree that at present Railways does not have provision to provide any reservation, but I would request the Hon'ble Minister to take necessary steps to bring amendment to existing rules of recruitment for class 'C' and 'D' Group Railway Employees.*

[English]

*PROF. M. RAMADASS (Pondicherry): Hon'ble Sir, on behalf of Paatholi Yokkal Kohchi and its Founder President Dr. Aiyya, I rise to support the Railway Budget, 2008-09, the fifth and the finest Budget of Shri Lalu Prashad Yadav, the Hon'ble Minister of Railways. During the last five years Railways has made impressive services from a cow level to a high level, from a losing proposition to or gainful proposition. Looked at from all angels - earnings operating ratio, safety, savings, passenger amenities, staff welfare and contribution to the exchequer, Indian Railways has come over of its old cobwebs and is now marching ahead with a Mission and vision.

Sir, I take this opportunity to congratulate and complement the three Railway Ministers, Members of the Railway Board and the enteire staff of Railways also have made this miracle possible.

Sir, I am also grateful to the Ministry of Railways over sanctioning some useful projects to my constituency. In fact this for the first time, that Pondichery has found adequate in the Indian Railways. The new Railway route from Chennai to Cudderlve via Puducheery woueld accelerate the entire development of both Tamil Nadu and the territory of Puducherry. The Garibi Rath between Puducheery and Yahwatpur (Bangalore) - one amongst the ten raths has earned the hearts of Puducherry people and I only wish that this rath should be the first to be run at the earliest. The four ROBs announced and a provision of 6 crores for creation of a facility at the railway station of Puducherry would add to the accelerated development of Railways in the neglected Puducherry. The railway work between Koricual, another version of the Union Territory of Puducherry which has been the demand of the people of that region, would catalyse the movement of men and goods between Koricul and other parts of India.

While appreciating the Minister for doing commendable work for Puducherry, I wish to remind him that what he has done is only a beginning work and that he has to do many things to make Railway journey more comfortable and people friendly.

Sir, I wish to remind the Hon'ble Minister that Puducherry is on various territory with very peculiar geographical location and sprad. My constituency that is the Union Territory of Puducherry is scattered in three States of India-Tamil Nadu, Karoikaol region lies at a

*Speech was laid on the Table

distance of 160 kms in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Maha Region lies at a distance of 800 kms in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh at a distance of 890 kms in Andhra Pradesh.

Puducherry deserves special consideration from the Railway Ministry for two reasons.

(i) It is the capital city of the Union Territory and should be accorded a special status which normally is extended to a State Capital. Puducherry should be linked to the capital city of India, namely Delhi, and other State Capitals, especially of Southern State Capitals.

(ii) Since it is geographically secured, special trains to link the people of these scattered regions have to be piled.

In view of the above rational, I request the Hon'ble Minister of Railway to meet the followings requirements of Puducherry.

(i) A new train from Puducherry to Mouyolve via Villipurau, Virdhachulam, Solerum, Calicut.

(ii) Extention of Kokiuoda-Chennai Express which carries people from Youou and which lies idle for more than 12 hours in Chennai, to Puducherry.

(iii) A new train from Puducherry to Hyderabad so that two Information Technology cities may be linked.

(iv) The present Puducherry-Chennai Express may be run for all seven days of the week so far in the five days.

(v) Changing the timing of Puducherry-Tripatthe Express to enable Puducherry Passengers to Express South bound Express Trains at Vidupraram.

(vi) A new survey to link Kouiketal and Salem may be ordered immediately.

(vii) Reservation and avail ling of concession tickets to sportsmen may be arranged in Puducherry southern cities at Trichy or Chennai which happens to be a time consuming affair.

(viii) A new train to Kanyakumari from Puducherry via Villuprura, Trichy, Madurai.

I hope the Railway Minister would conclude to these requirements. With these words, I conclude the Railway Budget, 2008-09.

[Translation]

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE (Mandla): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the rail budget is being discussed here. The impression I have got from listening to the speeches of the my learned colleagues here is that in the midst of all the tall claims, the actual situation of the railways has been kept veiled.

20.03 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

Mr. Chairman, Sir the gauge-conversion work in my constituency has been under consideration for a number of years. The Britishers had constructed the Jabalpur-Balaghat-Gondiya-Nagpur metre gauge line 60 years after independence, merely 42 km. of the 275 km. long railway line has been converted into broad gauge. It is unfortunate that the entire Jabalpur-Nainpur-Balaghat track remains to be converted into broad gauge. The NDA Government had made a provision for this work but the amount of allocation kept on falling in subsequent budgets. The House, the Railway Minister and the Government should give thought to the tribal areas. An hon'ble Member from North-East was complaining that his region has been neglected. If we talk about tribal areas, the largest stretch of tribal land falls in Madhya Pradesh. Apart from this, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are the leading states in the matter of environment, forest land and revenue earning.

Should not, then, these regions get a share of the contribution they are making to the national wealth. Who will think about the raw deal being given to these states? I have to say with regret that these states are facing discrimination. The hon'ble Railway Minister had visited Jabalpur sometime back. He had announced on 10 December, 2007 that the gauge conversion work would be completed by 2010. How much budget provision has been made for that work? The allies of the Government are praising the budget. It hurts when these regions are overlooked and when a project costing Rs. 511 crore is given an allocation of merely Rs. 67 crores. Consideration should be given to these regions. These regions are being ill treated. They have always been neglected. A train accident had taken place recently. The idea of opening a

[Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste]

railway divisional office at that place was floated but no further consideration was given to that proposal. A sub-divisional office is being run in Nagpur. The shortest meter gauge line runs through Balaghat-Mainpur and Jabalpur. You can check the map of India. This is the condition in these regions. That is why I want you to take time out to give thought to these regions. As far as Mainpur and Mandla Port are concerned, this is the district headquarters. A survey was conducted but no provision was made in the budget. Survey for railway line linking Jabalpur-Bilaspur-Muvali was conducted but no budget provision was made. A new project for linking Jabalpur to Dindori and Anuppur which is a religious place where Narmada flows had been envisaged but no further consideration was given to that project. There are many such important issues.

There is another point I would like to raise. There are two zones-Central-Western Railway Zone Jabalpur and South Eastern Railway Zone. The gauge conversion work in Jabalpur, Mainpur, Balaghat and Mainpur-Seoni-Nagpur is being carried out from Bilaspur. A discussion with railway officers throws up the fact that the construction division looking after the gauge conversion work is situated in Bilaspur. Is it practical to supervise gauge conversion work from Bilaspur, from a distance of 200-300 km. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will give five minutes to each Member. If the hon. Member cannot complete his speech within that time, he can lay the rest of his speech on the Table of the House. I will ring the bell and after that no concession can be given to anybody. There must be an end to every matter.

[Translation]

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULASTE: Mr. Chairman, Sir, concluding I lay the remaining part of my speech on the table of the House. I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

*1. Sir, an adequate budgetary allocation should be made for Jabalpur-Gondia gauge conversion. This project involves a cost of Rs. 511 crore approx. After its completion a quadrilateral railway route will appear on railway's map which would reduce the distance of south bound trains by 273 kms. During his visit to Jabalpur, on December 10, 2007 the hon'ble Minister of Railways had made an announcement that this project will be completed by the year 2010. Till now, the work has been completed upto 42 kms only and with this pace the work is unlikely to be completed even by the year 2020. Therefore, at least a budget of Rs. 200 crore should be allocated for this project so that it could be completed by the year 2010 with the prescribed budget. Besides, keeping in view the feasibility, the present implementing agency South Eastern Central Railway Bilaspur (Chhattisgarh) should be replaced by the Western Central Railways to expedite the work.

2. The distance between Nainpur and Mandla fort is approx 42 kms. Survey for its gauge conversion has already been completed. Similarly survey for gauge conversion of Nainpur-Sivani-Nagpur has also been conducted. Please include these gauge conversions in this budget.

EXTENSION OF NEW RAILWAY LINES:—

Parliamentary Constituency Mandal

1. Survey for laying new rail line from Jabalpur to Mandla via Bilaspur has been completed. Please include it in this railway budget.

2. Survey for laying new rail line between Jabalpur and Anuppur via Dindori Amarkantak has been completed. Please include this also in the budget.

3. Survey for laying new rail line between Jabalpur-Damoh and Panna has been conducted. The estimated cost of laying of this line is approx Rs. 444 crore. This line will reduce the distance by 100 kms. Therefore, please include this proposal in this budget on priority basis and allocate sufficient funds for this purpose.

4. The survey for new line Damoh-Kundalpur has been completed and the estimated cost of construction is approx Rs. 49 crore. This may also be included in the budget and a sufficient amount be allocated for it.

5. Under the new railway line approved for Lalitpur-Singrauli, Construction work has been approved from Khajuraho to Panna-Satna and from Reeva to Singrauli. Please allocate sufficient budgetary funds for it.

... This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

Parliamentary Constituency Balaghat

6. The work regarding laying of new rail line upto 40 kms. between Kantgi arid Balaghat has been started. Tirodi to Tumsar is a broad gauge line. Survey has been completed to lay a new railway line upto 12 kms from Kantgi to Tirodi. Laying of this line will create a new route from Balaghat to Nagpur via Tumsar. Therefore, please include it in the railway budget.

Train and Passenger facilities

1. There is a need to start a new train between Jabalpur and Mumbai which should run twice or thrice a week upto Pune. Almost all the zonal headquarters have a direct train for Mumbai except Western Central railway zone, Jabalpur despite heavy demand. Therefore, a direct train should be started from here to economic capital of the country which should run twice or thrice a week upto Pune.

2. Usually there is heavy rush of passengers from Jabalpur to Narsinhpur and Jabalpur to Katni Kamore. Therefore, for the convenience of the daily passengers, a local train (DMU) should be started on Narsinhpur-Jabalpur-Katni (Kamore) route.

3. As triple IT and other technical educational institutions are located in Jabalpur, therefore, a new train is required for Bangalore. A direct train should run from Jabalpur to Bangalore.

4. The Headquarters of Western Central Zone is located at Jabalpur Therefore, office of Railways Recruitment Board should also be set up at Jabalpur.

5. The frequency of the train introduced from Jabalpur to Jammu for Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine should be increased.

6. Approx. one lakh Sikhs are residing in Jabalpur Katni and the surrounding areas. Keeping in view their religious sentiments, a direct train should be introduced between Jabalpur and Amritsar and Mahakaushal Express and Jammu Tavi Express should be extended upto Amritsar from Delhi.

7. Keeping in view the large number of Bangla speaking people, a new train should be introduced from Jabalpur to Kolkata. Deeksha Bhumi Express and Chennai-Chhapra Ganga Kaveri Express should run daily.

8. As zonal headquarters of railway is situated at Jabalpur, Jabalpur and Katni stations should be developed as per I.S.O. 9001 certification.

9. Electrification of Itarasi-Jabalpur-Katni railway line, which has been pending for a long time should be taken up. It is economical and pollution free mean as compared to diseal, therefore, this work should be completed immediately.

10. The other major stations of Jabalpur are Madanmahal and Kachhpura which are situated in the midst of densely populated area. Trains should be given stoppages at these stations and these stations should be developed with all the facilities.

11. Keeping in view the number of passengers going to New Delhi, Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti should run daily. Besides, Gondwana Express with all its coaches should run direct from Jabalpur to Delhi so as to cut down traveling time.

12. Keeping in view the large number of pilgrims belonging to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, a new train should be introduced from Jabalpur to Chhapra via Allahabad.

13. In view of the number of persons belonging to Uttaranchal living in Jabalpur and the tourist and religious importance of both the places, a new train should be introduced from Jabalpur to Dehradun.

14. Chitrakoot Express running between Jabalpur and Lucknow should be extended upto Kathgodam (Uttaranchal) via Bareilly.

15. Ajmer is an important religious centre for the Hindus and the followers of other religions. A large number of people from Jabalpur travel to Ajmer every year. Hence Jabalpur-Jaipur-Dayodaya Express should be extended upto Ajmer for the convenience of passengers.

16. Keeping in view the number of passengers and the requirement of growing marble industry a new train should be introduced from Katni to Udaipur via Kota and Chittorgarh.

[Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste]

17. Keeping in view the availability of medical facilities and the commercial interests of the city, the train running between Jabalpur and Nagpur should be run daily from Katni to Nagpur via Jabalpur with additional coaches.

18. There is joint trade between Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Hence keeping in view the industrial importance of the region, an Intercity Express should be introduced from Katni to Bilaspur.

19. The work on for sanctioned project for construction of overbridge at Khirhani level crossing in Katni, for which tenders have also been invited, should be started soon.

20. A large number of people belonging to Goa and Mangalore live in Jabalpur. There is a direct train to Goa from all parts of the country. The passengers have to face problems as there is no train for Goa from Jabalpur situated in the middle of the country. Hence, a train should be introduced from Jabalpur to Goa on one or two days a week.

Lok Sabha Constituency Damoh

Damoh station has been approved for making it a model station. 62 lakhs of rupees have been allocated for its upgradation. This upgradation work should be started soon after completing the required formalities.

1. A large number of passengers from Balaghat have to travel to Raipur. A new train should be introduced from Balaghat to Raipur for their convenience.

2. The passengers at Balaghat have to face a lot of problems in reaching the capital of the state as there is no passenger train from Balaghat to Bhopal. Hence, a new passenger train should be introduced from Balaghat to Bhopal.

3. Keeping in view the number of passengers, Maharashtra Express running between Gondia and Pune should originate from Balaghat.

4. The passengers are put to considerable inconvenience as there is no direct train to Mumbai from Balaghat. Hence, Vidarbha Express, running between Gondia and Mumbai, should originate from Balaghat.

Lok Sabha Constituency Mandal

1. Nainpur should be developed as a training centre for railway staff.

2. Mangal Mandal staff community centre should be constructed in Nainpur.

3. The gauge conversion of Balaghat-Jabalpur via Nainpur section under South Central Railway should be carried out soon.

*DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Khajuraho): Sir, the railway of Laluji is running on time. He has been presenting successive budgets and appropriating applause. All this has reason too. He is taking full advantage of the infrastructure put in place by Nitish Kumar and improved the railways as a true and worthy heir. I thank you for all this.

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji and Nitish Kumar had laid the foundation stone of Khajuraho Mahoba rail line. He has announced to introduce Khajuraho-Delhi link express on three days a week after completion of the said line. I thank you for that. You have provided the stoppage of Uttar Pradesh Jan Sampark Kranti Express at Harpalpur on my demand and added a new feather in the development of my constituency by sanctioning a rake plant at Harpalpur station as well. You have helped in promoting tourism in Khajuraho and Orchha by extending Taj Express from Gwalior to Jhansi and I thank you for this. But, at the same time I request you to extend Taj Express upto Khajuraho. Apart from this, many other works are required to be done by you.

In this connection I would like to request for beautification of Lalitpur, Orchha, Bhivadi and Harpalpur stations and providing of amenities there. It would be a great advantage for the backward region of Bundelkhand if Tulsi Express is run daily. Bundelkhand is a backward area. If a Garib Rath is introduced in this area, it would help in the development of tourist spots like Orchha, and Khajuraho Kalinjar and promoting tourism also. Uttar Pradesh Sampark Kranti and Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti need to be run daily. The stoppage of Bhopal Express should be provided at Lalitpur and Datiya. The stoppage of Sachkhand and Tamilnadu Express should be provided at Bina. A refinery has been set up in Bina and this town is developing fast.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

Please provide the stoppage of Shatabdi Express at Bina. You have extended Jabalpur-Kota Express upto Jaipur. I request you to extend this train upto Ajmer Sharif so that both the Hindus and the Muslims may reach their respective places of pilgrimage-Pushkar and Ajmer Sharif.

Delhi-Bhubaneshwar Sambalpur Express via Bena runs thrice a week. I urge that this train should run daily and new bogies and a AC-1 bogie should also be attached to it. Apart from this, there is a need to double and electrify Mandvi-Manikpur-Allahabad line. Survey for Panna-Khajuraho railway line has been completed. The laying of said line should be started so that it may be helpful in development of Bundelkhand. Lalitpur-Sangrauii railway line, considered as life line for comprehensive development of Bundelkhand and Baghealkhand should be taken up expeditiously. This line needs additional funds. The hon'ble Minister has assured that shortage of funds will not come in its way but the work is going on at snail's pace. The objection of Department of Forests and all national gardens should be cleared immediately and the work should be sanctioned. Mahoba-Khajuraho line was scheduled to be completed by 26 January, 2008, but because of political bias completion of the said line is being delayed by the local contractors. I would like the hon'ble Minister of Railways to take stringent measures for its expeditions completion. The hon'ble Minister in his budget speech has announced Khajuraho-Delhi Link express thrice a week. The said line may be completed and the Link Express should run all the seven days a week.

In the end, I request for construction of on overbridge near Bamitha station on Khajuraho-Mahoba line so that the traffic can move smoothly. Khajuraho is a world famous tourist spot, therefore, there is a need for an overbridge here for smooth flow of traffic.

[English]

*SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ (Udupi): The Railway budget, presented by the Hon'ble Railway Minister, has given a short shift to Karnataka. Inter connectivity within the State has received negligible attention and importance. We had presented a 'wish list" tabling the State's requirements which included completiuon of the kadar-Chikkamagalur-Sakleswar railway line, Hassan-Bangalare-via Shrvana Belgola (166km) railway line, Bangalore-Satyamangalore line, Railway line between Talaspady and Tokur, including Permbur yard to Konkan Railway. Doubling of the railway line between Kankandy-mangalore, etc. But none of these projects had seen significant progress and the allocation to these projects is too meager to make any major headway. Some of these works have been taken up but the progress is marginal. It is a matter of great concern that even an assurance was not given by the Railway Minister to take up the sanctioned works in a phase wise manner and completing them within a stipulated time frame.

The delay in completing the sanctioned work would have a bearing on the development of Karnataka, which was poorly served by the Railways compared to other major States in India.

Railway Minister Lalu Prasad has announced various steps for passengers, including forces for students and concession for senior citizens. But all this seems to have been done with an eye on the 2009 elections. A seven percent cut is Ac-I class fees, four per cent in Ac-II class fares, five per cent in second class fares is discriminatory. This should have been in the reverse order.

Nothing has been said about the steps taken to control the practice of passengers from unreserved compartments entering the reserved ones during day time. There is no mention of improving the catering services.

The Railways move of reducing the fares, announcing free passes for students and various other concessions is welcome. But unless the frequency of services is increased all sections no purpose will be served by the concession. The Railways should increase the frequency of trains, particularly suburban in order to enable to people to reap the benefits of the concessions announced in the budget.

The people of my constituency are demanding the Railway Minister to include the railway line between Talapady and Tokur, including Panambar yard, to Konkan Railway.

The railway lines in the 19 km radius around mangalore had been divided into Southern Railway, North-Eastern Railway and Konkan Railway. As a result, whenever the problem arises, they continue to remain unsolved.

*The 101 km railway line between Diwa and Roha comes under the Central railway. The 25 km stretch

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Smt. Manorama Madhavraj]

between Mangalore and Panambur yard comes under southern railway. People have the misconception that the entire 1,185 km stretch between Kurla and Mangalore belongs to Konkan Railway and its entire income is used by the same.

In fact Konkan Railway earns the income generated by selling tickets and goods charges for a stretch of 1,059 kms between Roha and Tokur only. The People are demanding the extension of Mangalore-Bangaalore train started recently till Karwar as that was not of any help to the people of Udupi, Kundapura, Bhakala and Kawar.

They also demanded the immediate starting of Yashawanthapura-Arasikere-Hassan-Mangalore train. The restarting of Janashatabdi train, increasing the number of bogies of Matsya Gandha to 22, sanctioning a stop at Udupi to Kotcchuveli-Chandigarh train, which runs once in a week, running the Bandra/Mumbai Central-Vasai Road-mangalore train twice a week, shifting the railway police station from Manipal to Udupi Railway Station at Indrali, arranging a coin booth for allotting platform ticket, running special trains during winter and summer between Mumbai and Mangalore, starting a passenger train to leave Madgao railway station in the morning and run towards Mangalore, recognition to the Railway Yatri Sangha and starting a pay booth for taxis and autorickshaws at Udupi Railway Station.

I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister to take necessary steps extension of the Bangalore-Mangalore train to Karawar the extension of train service would benefit the people of Dakshina Kannada district only. The number of coaches of the Mangalore-Mumbai Matsyagandha Express should be increased to 22 and the Jan Shatabdi Express between Mangalore and Mumbai be revived. The weekly Kochuveli-Chandigarh Sampark Kranti Express should be given a stop at Udupi. Special trains should be run between Mangalore and Mumbai during summer and winter.

The Railway Police Station at Manipal should be shifted to Udupi, a pay booth be started for taxis and autorickshaws at Udupi Railway Station and coin booth facility for platform tickets installed at the railway station.

The people of Karnataka are happy as their 12 years long awaited train was flagged off very recently from Bangalore to Mangalore. This popular train runs through some of the most breath taking landscape in the Western Ghats. Regarding this railway line I can say that only a half job done as the work on the Bangalore-Shravanabelagola-Hassan line remains incompleted and the Mangla Express is forced to take a circuitous route, making the commuters spend nearly 13 hours journey. I, therefore, urge upon the Hon'ble Laluji to kindly and expeditiously complete the remaining work so that the train service will be able to realize its full potential. Apart from the night service that it has started now, the railways should immediately consider a day service as well to enable people to enjoy the scenic beauty of terrain the train passes through. It will also make sense from the tourism point view.

The commercially lucrative doubling of Bangalore-Mysore, the most busy line between Tumkur and Bangalore and the most important railway line between Mysore and Chamarajanayara have to be completed at the earliest. These very important lines have been limping along for years for lack of allocation of funds. Now time has has come to expedite these vital three railway lines without any further delay in Karnataka.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Chaudhary Bijendra Singh, please conclude your speech within five minutes.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH (Aligarh): Mr. Chairman, sir, please do not stop me during these five minutes.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: There can be no concession. I know that I am doing a thankless job, but I am forced to do it.

[Translation]

CHAUDHARY BIJENDRA SINGH: (Aligarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I convey my thanks to you and express gratitude for giving me a chance to speak on the railway budget.

Sir, the department of railways is a very important department. It assumes more significance today when communal forces are trying to divide the nation on casteist, religious and linguistic lines. The railway is instead uniting the people from Kanyakumari to Jammu. India is the best example of unity in diversity. My colleague sitting

right in front of me is constantly interrupting me. Let us set the language of the budget aside and try to save this country first. They have tried to disrupt the unity but Lalu ji has done enough development and united the country by extending the rail network from one corner of the country to another. In this regard, I would like to congratulate Shrimati Sonia Gandhi, Dr. Manmohan Singh and Lalu ji.

Despite rising inflation and increase in the prices of iron and steel, passenger fares and freight rated have not been hiked during the last four-five years. There should definitely be a reason behind it and I do not feel like congratulating Lalu ji on this account, nor am I supporting it. The Railway Budget presented by Lalu ji has become a hot topic of discussion amongst 120 crore people of India. In a democracy, a Minister praised by the people, should also be praised by us in the House, as we are the people's representative and we come here for the people's sake. The railway budget presented by Laluji is a common man's budget, the budget of the poor and also a budget for the development of the country.

Sir, only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches. A person who has been born and brought up in particular conditions, only knows about it and nobody else does. I would like to draw the attention of Shri Rathwa Ji to my constitutency. Aligarh is a historically important city. Approximately thirty thousand students from across the world study in Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. In view of increasing population in Delhi, there is an urgent need to increase the number of trains at railway stations around Delhi. It is necessary also in view of the fact that large number of office goers travel to and fro.

Sir, I would like to place my 2-3 demands. Being the birth place of Lord Krishna Mathura is famous throughout the world and Aligarh Muslim University at Aligarh serves the minorities. It is a symbol of brotherhood. For the last four year, I have been demanding for a railway link between Aligarh and Mathura. Today, again I demend a railway link between Aligarh and Mathura. Kasganj is a bing town and Atrauli has a big atomic power station at Narora and there is no railway line upto Narora, whereas, Atrauli is just 10 kms away. Therefore, I demand a railway line from Kasganj to Delhi, via Atroli, Khurja. The people of this area have been demanding it since long. Though so many years have elapsed since independence, yet, there has been no development on Aligarh-Bareilly route. Only one train introduced at the beginning is available on this line. My submission is that two trains should be started on this line and AC coaches should be provided in these trains... *(Interruptions)* Jail road in Aligarh is accident prone. Every weak 8-10 accidents occur on this road resulting in death of many people. Often accidents occur here. Earlier also I have demanded and today again I urge for either an over-bridge or an under-bridge on this road. Earlier also, I had submitted three proposals, regarding Jamalpur Bypass, Madarak Ring Road and Somna Road. Today again I urge for the same. Earlier I had demanded for providing stoppage of Vikramshila and Licchavi Express. Five Rajdhani trains come in the morning. Last Rajdhani should be provided at least one minute's stoppage there, so that the M. Ps, VIPs or any other person have no difficulty... *(Interruptions)* Journalists should be given free pass facilities... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will ring the first bell. After some time I will ring the second bell. After the second bell is rung, nothing will be recorded. Whatever you may speak, it will not go on record after the second bell. I have given you six or seven minutes.

Shri Veerendra Kumar.

In the interest of the hon. Members, I am doing this job. It is the requirement of the ruling party to ensure that the discussion is completed in time. I can understand the Opposition if they take some time.

[Translation]

*SHRI GHURAN RAM (Palamu): Sir, Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Ji has presented a historic Railway budget for the year 2008-2009. I rise to support this budget. After independence Lalu Ji is the first Railway Minister who has tried to benefit each and every person of the country and has made the Railways earn a profit of Rs 25,000 crore. I would like to express my gratitude to hon'ble Railway Minister for he enabled the Railway earn so much profit without increasing freight charges or passenger fares whereas during the tenure of NDA Government the Railways was incurring a loss of Rs. 2,900 crore. Hon'ble Lalu ji has enabled the Railways to earn a profit of thousands of crores of rupees ever since he became the Railways Minister. His name will go down in the annals of history for setting up of rail coach factory at Raibareily, wheel manufacturing at factory Chappra.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ghuran Ram]

thermal power station at Dehri Aanson, acquisition of two units of Bharat Wagon factory in Mokama and Muzaffarpur, setting up of railway sleeper factory in Madhepura and other works done in Saharsa and Gopalganj. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Railway Minister towards certain important demands of my Parliamentary Constituency, Palamu:

1. Introduction of a new EMU train from Dehri to Barwadeeh.
2. Provision of a stoppage of Varanasi to Ranchi Intercity at Kazaid Navadeeh.
3. Provision of stoppages for the Aaransi and Bamniha Chopan passenger train.

[English]

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR (Calicut): While thanking the hon. Railway Minister for reduction of fares and freight and congratulating his entire team for the record profits generated last year, the creeping privatization tendencies in this vital sector can only be viewed with apprehension. Some aspects in the Budget with specific reference to Kerala need mention.

The announcement of the proposed Kanjikkode Coach Factory in Palghat is historic since it will change the industrial face of Kerala. The work of road over bridges sanctioned years back is still languishing. Nandi bazaar, near Calicut is a specific instance. This causes untold hardship to road users even of the National Highways. Work on five over bridges, LC 201, between Elathur 85 Quilandy, LC 185, fourth railway gate, Calicut, LC 174, near Parappanangady gate, LC 172, between Tanur 8B Tirur and LC 170, near Thirunavaya, are all ready to start. Kozhikode railway station work is still pending and nothing has been done so far.

Passenger trains are perennially over crowded due to shortage of coaches, especially in Malabar area. One option is that the Nilgiri express/Blue Mountain express plying between Chennai and Mettupalayam, be extended to Calicut. Since the train reaches Mettupalayam at 6.15 a.m. and departs for Chennai only at 7.45 p.m., there is ample time to gainfully run the unutilised bogies. This will benefit Malabar-bound passengers, including small traders, businesspeople and office-goers and also ease pressure on the Coimbatore-Mangalore fast passenger. Similarly, bogies of the Amrita Express can also be profitably utilized during day, by extending a service to Kannur or Calicut, at the very least. Moreover, railways can also earn additional revenue.

Nothing has materialised of the three surveys conducted for Tellicherry-Nanjankode section connecting Wayanad and Nilambur-Mysore new lines. This project which will benefit the people of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala has been dragging on for decades. Serious attention should be given for speedy implementation, since it will reduce the running time between Bengalooru and Kochi by nearly 3 hours. The additional traffic generated on the commissioning of Vallarpadam project can be diverted through this line also to relieve congestion. No funds have been provided for Shoranur-Mangalore electrification, instead a feasibility study has been proposed. Grants for track doubling, road over bridges, rail bridges construction and electrification has been curtailed from Rs. 283.97 crore in 2007-08 to Rs. 240 crore in 2008-09, whereas by the Railway's own estimate doubling works alone requires Rs. 2,144.80 crore. Only Rs. 25 crore has been allocated for the 145 km Angamali-Sabarimala and 51 km Tanur-Guruvayur railway lines, which are inadequate to ensure speedy completion of these projects. Adequate steps need be taken for completing the land acquisition for the latter line. Similarly, the Rs. 1.1 crore allocation for the Rs. 85 crore Alappuzha Fabricated Rolling Stock components is also grossly inadequate.

The 2 new trains, Bangalore-Coimbatore-Ernakulam Inter-city and Shoranur-Nilambur passenger have been announced. But these are already in operation.

Even though at the time of preparation of budget documents funds are provided for various works in Kerala region, it is a common practice during the course of the financial year that the funds are reappropriated by the zonal Railway Administration at Chennai and diverted to various projects in other places, while progress of work lags in Kerala. Even in this budget, guage conversion (Palghat-Pollachi-Coimbatore Quilon-Tenkasi-Virudunagar) and electrification works (Trivandrum-Cape) have been clubbed together with the intention of utilizing the funds predominantly for the works elsewhere in the guise of sharing of funds.

LHB (Linke Hoffman Bosch) type coaches, which are run on 4 Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains, have to be introduced in TVC-NZM Rajadhani Express, the longest run Rajdhani, also, even before March 2010. But overall, Laluji has again performed a miracle. The elevation of porters to gangmen/other Group 'D' posts is a historic step. Truly he has imparted visionary dynamism to the Railways. With these words, I conclude my speech.

*SHRI ANANTA NAYAK (Keonjhar): I rise to take part in the discussion on Railway Budget. Sir, Railway is the life line of the nation; it is the largest public sector undertaking. Now this PSU is earning profit and paying dividend every year. I thanks the Railway Minister to improve the financial condition of Railway. But we should not forget the employees at the grassroots, the worker the gangamen, the railway Staffs and last but not least the Railway Board also deserve thanks for paying dividend.

Railway is the largest transport system in the country. But the system needs connection with each and every State irrespective of the fact whether any areas are hilly, dense forest and inaccessible due to same reason. Even after 61 years of Independence people in some States have not yet seen Rail. So, Rail connectivity must be provided to such areas.

Development of infrastructure depends mainly on the rail connectivity. There are 12 major ports in the country. All the ports must be provided with rail connectivity. While presently the Rail Budget the Hon'ble Minister has referred to new train between Jaipur and Paradeep of course train services is available between Cuttack and Paradeep which is being extended to Bhubaneswar. I urge upon the Minster to connect Paradip Port with the hinterland, the Minister has announced new lines from Keonjhargarh to Badapaahad and Barbil to Barsuan. A loop line may be constructed between Keonjhargarh and Ganhdamardan sector. This will facilitate the transport of iron ore and other minerals to Paradeep Port for export purpose. The cost of opertion will also not much. Each line will give profit to Railway Department.

The Hon'ble Minister of Railways in kind enough to introduce Garib Rath to different States. But he is unkind to my State like Orissa. I request him to introduce a Garib Rath between New Delhi and Bhubneswar connecting my Parliamentary constituency Keonjhar. I take this opportunity to thank him for introducing of new train between Keonjhargarh and Puri. That means the Hon'ble Minister has recognized the importance to mineral rich Keonjhar parliamentary Constituency. He has also increased the frequency of 2421/2422 Bhubaneswar via Tata Nagar. So we are having Radhani for 5 days in a week. I demand that a pair of Radhani Express may be introduced between New Delhi and Bhubaneswar via Tatanagar and keonjhargarh. The people of the backward area which is very rich in minerals and developed industrially will be greatly benefited if this train is introduced we have got a large number of workers from the home State of Hon'ble Minister and also from West Bengal. So adequate train connection may be provided between Keonjhargarh, Patna and Kolkota. A large number of devotees visit Deogarh from my area. We will be grateful if the Hon'ble Minister considers a daily train from Keonjhargarh to Deoghar. The pilgrims will get direct connection to Babadham. This will promote tourism also.

Sir, coming to freight earning the undivided south Eastern Railways was earn highest amount of revenue from freight among all the Railway Division. After bifurcation the East Coast Railway has the highest revenue earner from freight on that basis I was demanding better treatment to Orissa from day one of my election as member of parliament. I belong to a Constituency which contributes maximum revenue to Railway by freight traffic. This freight earning will further increase one the line from Daitari and Banspani announced by the Minister. I appeal to Shri Lalu Prasadji to provide adequate fund for construction of additional line. This will facilitate the transport of Iron ore to Paradeep. India will get huge amount of foreign Exchange from the export of Mineral. In addition to Railway the National exchequer will be benefitted thereby.

Sir, there is an urgent need to modernize the Indian Railway. I am glad that the Hon'ble Railway Minister has taken steps in that direction. I appeal the Railway Minister to give priority to modernize the signaling system and safety along with development of the security of the passengers. Passengers one boarded the train must reach their destination safely. The security must be provided in the long distance trains.

Sir, the Hon'ble Minister has sanctioned the doubling of some lines. As far as Orissa is concerned only a few kilometres from Jakhapura to Haridaspur, Paradeep to Bansapani, Barbil to Badampahad and Champajhar to Bimlagarh have been mentioned in his speech. However I welcome the proposal for doubling Jhakapura-bansapani line.

Sir, the Minister has introduced a bi-weekly Express train between Bhubaneswar and Mumbai via Sambalpur. This train should be made a daily train. I take this opportunity to request the Minister to increase the frequency of Hirakhanda Express from tri-weekly to a daily train.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ananta Nayak]

Sir, the Rail Vikash Nigam Ltd., is doing very well. It should pay special attention to complete the ongoing projects in Orissa. The target date has been fixed to complete the gaudge conversion of Naupada-Gunupur. It is an old project lunched during British regime. It should be completed within the target date.

Sir, So far as the new projects are concerned a small Port in between Banspani and Jurdi has been selected. This should at least be completed upto Keonjhargarh in 2008-09. At the same time all possible efforts should be made to complete the proposed line between Banspani and Barbil. Besides proposal to construct some new projects like Bargarh to Padampur, Talcher to Gopalpur and Rupsa-Bangiriposhi-Gorumaihini and Badapahad to Keonjhargarh are pending with the Govt. I request the Railway Minister to extend financial support to these projects.

Sir, So far as survey is concerned Banspani to Bimlagarh should be given priority.

Sir, I shall be failing in my duty if I donot drawn the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to remind him the urgent need to introduce the Express train from Keonjhargarh to Howrah and Barbil to Vishakapatnam via keonjhargarh and Bhubaneswar. I hope that the introduction of these new trains would be considered during the current financial year.

Sir, now the Kanasatabdi Express train is running from Howrah and Barbil. This should be extended to Keonjhargarh for which i have been demanding time and again.

Lastly, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the poor passenger amenities in the Railway Stations in Orissa. Except a few most of the stations do not have such facilities. Greater emphasis should be laid to provide passenger amenity in all these stations. Also demand that platform for Barbil station should be raised during this year. I thank the Railway Minister for considering the genuine demands of Keonjhar.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA (Hamirpur, U.P.): Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak after waiting for a long period. Hon'ble Railway Minister has presented the railway budget for the year 2008-2009, in regard to which I would like to say that the largest states of the country, Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, which provide maximum revenue to the railways, have been neglected in this budget. Particularly Bundelkhand, the most backward area of the country has been neglected completely. Even after 60 years of independence not even a single new railway line has been sanctioned for my Parliamentary Constituency, Hamirpur. A number of surveys were carried out at many places but that place has always remained neglected. Many of my colleagues have said that there is a huge regional imbalance in the country. Maximum amount of funds earmarked in the rail budget is spent in one state only and that is Bihar. This is what people allege and it is true also. I have been demanding for the last four years that new railway line should be laid from Harpalpur to Hamirpur headquarters via Raath.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: You can lay your speech on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Sir, a new railway line should be laid from Mahoba to Urai via Sarila, Gohand and Raath. Similarly, there has been a demand for laying new railway line from Harpalpur to Kalpi via Raath, Gohand, Sarila and Chandot. But even after a lot of assurances from hon'ble Railway Minister, none of the works have ever been completed. I write to hon'ble Lalu Ji and Velu Ji replies to them but these are mere assurances. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: My hon. Friend, you can lay your speech on the Table of the House. Even if it is lengthy or even if it is a book, do not bother; you can bring it to the Table and it would form part of the record.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: Sir, similarly, doubling and electrification of the Jhansi-Manikpur and Manikpur-Kanpur railway tracks should also be carried out. All the railway stations falling on the Hamirpur-Mahoba railway line in my constituency, are very small. There is no electricity, no shed for passengers, no drinking water

and even there is no water in the toilets there. The passengers there have to face a number of difficulties.

Sir, there are a lot of demands, if you allow me I would like to lay them on the Table of the House.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Even if it is very lengthy, you do not have to bother; it will form part of the record.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNARAYAN BUDHOLIA: I have not yet exhausted the five minutes time given by you. Lalu ji has introduced Garib Raths all over the country. I would request him to extend it from Delhi to Banaras via Jhansi-Mahoba-Banda-Chitrakoot-Allahabad. In the supplementary demands for grants of the railways we had made a demand for running the Uttar Sampark Kranti five times in a week which was earlier running three days a week upto Manikpur. Hon'ble Minister had announced in the House that it would be run five days in a week but the same has not been implemented so far. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Shrimati Satheedevi can speak. Nothing will go on record except what Shrimati Satheedevi says.

*....(Interruptions)***

[Translation]

*I thank you for giving me an opportunity to present my views on the budget presented by the hon'ble Minister of Railways for the year 2008-09.

I would like to submit to the hon'ble Minister that even after 60 years of our independence, my Parliamentary Constituency Hamirpur (Uttar Pradesh) is deprived of railway facilities. Besides Rath, Sarila and Charkhari tehsils of my Parliamentary constituency, headquarter Hamirpur also lacks railway facilities. For the past four years, I have been demanding, through budget and correspondence, laying of new railway lines and other railway facilities but, unfortunately, no positive reply has been received from the hon'ble Minister though in his budget speeches he always shows railway in profit. The railway has sef a record by earning surplus cash of twenty five thousand crore rupees during the year 2007-08. However, argument of lack of funds is advanced in replies to the letters. Without saying anything more, I would like to make the following demands to the hon'ble Minister:—

1. Survey should be conducted for laying a new railway line from Hamirpur road to Vivar-Muskra, Rath (tehsil) Panvadi-Harpalpur via Headquarters Hamirpur (the railway station of which should be near Vikas Bhavan Hamirpur, Village-Kuchhechha). A new railway line should also be laid from Urrai to Mahoba via Rath, Charkhari and from Harpalpurto Kalpi via Rath, Gohand, Sarila and Chadaut.

2. Doubling and electrification of railway lines between Jhansi and Manikpur and Manikpur-Kanpur should be done.

3. Number of trains should be increased on Jhansi-Manikpur line in view of rise in population.

4. The Belatal, Kulpahad, Charkhari road, Mahoba, Kabrai, Baripura, Hamirpur road, Egohata, Bharua Sumerpur, Ragaul and Echauli stations of my parliamentary constituency Hamirpur-Mahoba should be upgraded and the basic amenities like adequate number of sheds to protect the passengers from rain and sun, potable water, waiting rooms, arrangement of electricity in case of load shedding and safety of bag and baggage of passengers etc. should be provided there even if one has to relax the rules for this purpose. Moreover, with a view to increase the number of passengers on these stations, publicity should be done amongst the people of adjacent areas and proper arrangements should be made for them to reach the railway station.

5. Railway overbridges should be constructed at Mauranipur level crossing, Jhansi-Manikpur railway line, Harpalpur crossing at railway crossing between Supa, Kidari and Mataudh-Banda, Rath crossing of Urrai headquarter at Jhansi-Kanpur railway line and at Rinia railway level crossing. Till the construction of these bridges, these level crossings should be closed at the time of passage of trains for a few minutes using the latest communication technology to avoid unnecessary wastage of time.

**Not recorded.

... This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Rajnarayan Budholia]

6. The Garib Rath running between Lucknow and Raipur should definitely be provided a halt at Ragaul.

7. Touch screen facility should be made available at reservation centers in Jhansi, Lalitpur, Urrai, Banda and Mahoba.

8. Platform cover sheds extension work should be started at Jhansi, Banda, Urrai, Mahoba, Ragaul, Kabrai and Harpalpur stations.

9. Delux toilets should be provided in the circulating areas of Harpalpur, Mahoba, Ragaul, Banda and Urrai stations.

10. The platforms at Banda, Mahoba and Harpalpur stations should be converted into high level platforms.

11. The platforms at Mauranipur, Harpalpur, Mahoba, Kabrai, Ragaul, Sumerpur and Belatal should be extended.

12. Enquiry counter, public address system and other passenger amenities should be provided at Mahoba, Harpalpur, Kabrai and Ragaul stations.

13. The work on Mahoba-Khajuraho railway line upto 65 kms. was to be completed by 30th June, 2007 but it has not been completed till now. The hon'ble Minister in his budget speech has expressed the possibility of its early completion. Khajuraho-Delhi Link Express which is to be run three days a week should run daily. Besides, sufficient space for an extra train and for changing the engine should be provided at Khajuraho railway station. Trains like Shatabdi Express should be introduced from Delhi to Khajuraho and a new train should also be started from Banaras to Khajuraho.

14. The hon'ble Minister, in his budget speech, has mentioned about the electrification of Kanpur-Jhansi railway line. The electrification of Jhansi-Manikpur railway line, whose survey has been completed, should also be done immediately.

15. The proposed foot overbridge at Mahoba railway station to move from one platform to another should be constructed immediately.

16. For the development of Kabrai stone industry, arrangements should be made for loading and unloading of retail and wholesale supply of stones from Kabrai railway, station through wagons. At present thousands of trucks loaded with stone are being run daily by road to which railway officials have not paid attention so far.

17. Proposed installation of UTS/PRS in Ragaul, Hamirpur and Harpalpur should be carried out immediately. Sale of general tickets at Raath reservation center should be made available three days in advance.

18. Gwalior-Allahabad-Howrah Chambal Express (2175-2176) which runs three days a week should be run daily in the interest of the people of Bundelkhand.

19. Even the big farmers in Bundelkhand region are on the verge of starvation due to the severe drought conditions prevailing in the region for the last four years. They have no means of alternate employment. A Railway factory should be set up in either Mahoba, Jhansi or Banda so that the unemployed farmers and youth of the region are able to get employment so as to put a check on their migration.

20. Meetings of DRUCC in Jhansi division should be held at an internal of 100 days and the Members should be issued free railway passes for traveling to railway stations that fall within their constituencies.

21. Uttar Pradesh Sampark Kranti, Chambal Express and Tulsi Express should be provided halts at Belatal and Kabrai railway stations.

22. Tulsi Express should be made a daily train so that people from Budelkhand find it easier to travel to another places and regional imbalance is removed.

23. The hon'ble Railway Minister had announced, while replying to the previous Demands for Supplementary Grants, that frequency of Uttar Pradesh Sampark Kranti would be increased from three day a week to five days in a week as demanded by me. But frequency of the train has not been increased as yet which is being resented by the people of the region. Hence, the frequency of the train should be increased with immediate effect and 23/24 coaches should be attached to the train with a large number of general coaches.

24. Construction work of coach repairing factory of North-Central Railways, proposed to be set up in Jhansi on land earmarked for the purpose, should be started.

25. The speed of trains passing through stations in the Jhansi-Banda division should be increased from 50 km. per hour to 100 km. per hour.

26. Adequate number of General coaches should be attached to all passenger trains.

27. Thousands of people travel on the roofs of trains from Jhansi to Chitrakoot Dham Karbi on the day of Amavasya every month. The railway administration has failed to make adequate arrangements for the passengers. The number of trains should be increased during the peak days and the said measures should be widely publicised.

28. Twenty rupees per ticket cancellation charge is realized on cancellation of tickets reserved two to three months before the date of journey. If should be reduced to ten rupees.

29. Before presentation of the Rail budget in the House, I had requested the hon'ble Railway Minister to start trains on the following routes which may kindly be started:-

    1. New Delhi to Puri via Jhansi-Banda-Manikpur.
    2. Gorakhpur to Chennai via Kanpur-Ragaul-Banda-Manikpur.
    3. Patna to Kota via Banda-Mahoba-Jhansi-Indore.
    4. Jabalpur to Jammu-Tawi via Manikpur-Banda-Kanpur-Aligarh-Delhi.
    5. Jabalpur to Ajmer via Manikpur-Banda-Mahoba-Jhansi-Mathura.
    6. Rewa to Lucknow via Banda-Ragaul-Kanpur.
    7. Ayodhya to Banda via Varanasi-Allahabad-Chitrakoot.
    8. Rewa to New Delhi via Banda-Mahoba-Jhansi.
    9. Ayodhya to Ujjain via Banda-Mahoba-Jhansi-Lalitpur.
    10. Allahabd to Bhopal via Banda-Mahoba-Harpalpur-Jhansi-Lalitpur.
    11. Allahabad to Urai via Banda-Mahoba-Harpalpur-Jhansi.
    12. Satna to Farrukhabad via Manikpur-Banda-Ragaul-Sumerpur-Kanpur.
    13. Banda to Guna via Mahoba-Harpalpur-Jhansi-Shivpuri
    14. A direct train from Mahoba to Lucknow.
    15. A daily Garib Rath from Delhi to Varanasi via Jhansi-Mahoba-Banda-Chitrakoot-Allahabad.

Sir, I regret to say that the hon'ble Railway Minister has not made provision to run trains on even a single any of the above mentioned routes. All the suggestions I have made are based on the interaction with the people of my constituency about the ways in which the railway services could be improved so as to benefit them. I hope that the hon'ble Railway Minister would implement these suggestions keeping in mind the broader public interest.*

[English]

*SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO (Guntur): At the outset, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in this debate. The Guntur Railway Division has been formed in the year 1998 to meet the needs of the passengers of my area under South Central Railway. The assurance to divert/extent some of the trains bound towards New Delhi and Chennai via Guntur/New Guntur has not been fully retrieved.

Naturally, the new Guntur Railway division is encountering teething troubles (popularly called as BAALA ARISHTA).

Lalooji should prop up the division to become a healthy and energetic adolescent (Koumara Dasa)

The following problems and requirements deserve the attention of Lalu ji.

(a) Doubling and electrification of track;

(b) Introduction of new trains and

(c) Diversion of some trains through Guntur/New Guntur railway stations.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Rayapati Sambasiva Rao]

(a) Doubling and Electrification of Guntur-Tenali Track

Top priority should be accorded for doubling and electrification of Guntur-Tenali section. Presently, it is a single line with electric traction. My request is that the track should be doubled and then that particular track electrified. The Railway Board has surveyed doubling and electrification of Krishna Canal- Guntur-Tenali triangle (53Kms) at a cost of Rs 121.59 crores. The doubling and electrification of Krishna Canal-Guntur stretch has been completed. My plea is Guntur-Tenali stretch (25 kms) also should be doubled and that the newly laid section line also should be electrified. It will facilitate easy diversion of main line trains via Guntur/New Guntur. This single track is a bottleneck resulting in delaying of trains. Then Guntur will be placed on Chennai-New Delhi and Chennai-Howrah main tracks.

(b) Nallapadu (Near Guntur)-Pagidipalli (Bibinagar)

The Guntur-Secunderabad section is the principal artery in the new Guntur Division. The section connects the fertile and prosperous districts of Nellore, Prakasam, Guntur, Nalgonda, Ranga Reddy Districts to A.P.State's capital, Hyderabad. The line between Bibinagar and Secunderabad is a double track of electric traction. The remaining line between Guntur and Bibinagar requires urgent doubling and electrification which is the shortest route to reach State Capital. The line is supersaturated. The utilization is more than 120% of the capacity. There is heavy traffic on the line.

Introduction of New Trains:

(a) Intercity between Guntur and Tirupathi during day time: Thousands of pilgrims visit Tirupathi daily. This train will enable them to reach Tirupathi, Kalahasti and Kanipakam without requiring sleeper facility as it is a day time train.

(b) Intercity between Guntur and Chennai

Guntur is a very big commercial, educational and medical center. Many people visit Chennai very frequently. Hence, introduction of Intercity Express between Guntur-Chennai will help Gunturians to reach Chennai.

(c) Regular train to Bangalore

There is heavy movement of people between Bangalore and Guntur. A large number of software professionals who work in Bangalore hail from Guntur. Therefore, it is essential to introduce a train from Guntur-Bangalore so that the train reaches Bangalore before 5 am to enable the professionals to attend their offices in time.

(d) Pinakini Express (2711/2712)

Gunturians desire to reach Chennai and stations enroute during day time. Pinakini Express(2711/2712) between Vijayawada-Chennai will serve the purpose if it is diverted via New Guntur Railway Station. This is a long promise of the railwav administration to Gunturians.

3. The following Express trains should be diverted via Guntur/New Guntur stations.

(i) Tamil Nadu (2621/2622);

(ii) Kerala Express (2625/2626);

(iii) Ernakulam-Patna (6359/6360);

(iv) Vijayawada-ManmadExpress (7208/7207);

(v) Navajeevan(Ahmedabad-Chennai-Ahmedabad) (2655/2656);

(vi) Seshadri Express (7210/7209) (Kakinada-Bangalore)

4. Extension of Devagiri Express (7058/7057)

Devagiri Express which runs between Secunderabad-Mumbai may be extended to Guntur via Nalgonda and Nadikudi. It will be a boon to Gunturians to reach Mumbai directly. It will incidentally touch the pilgrim centres, Shirdi, Basara and tourist destinations via Aurangabad which Andhras visit in large numbers.

I conclude my speech with the hope the people of my Parliamentary Constituency would get justice by way of fulfillment of their genuine demands which have been pending for quite a long time.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI (Badagara): Thank you, Sir.

The Railway Budget for 2008-09 is appreciated to the extent it has some positive features. It is well appreciated that there is reduction in the passenger fare, especially in the situation where general public is suffering a lot from the all round price rise of essential commodities.

The special considerations given to girl students and senior citizens, especially women are also highly appreciated.

Hon. Lalu Ji is always saying that Indian Railways is becoming more and more profitable. The share of that profit should be distributed to all States, especially to the States which contribute a lot by way of railway fare and freightage. The State of Kerala is contributing much towards the revenue of Indian Railways. Hence, towards the developmental works in the State of Kerala there should be more allotment of funds. I do really appreciate that there is some attempt towards this in this Budget. But that is not at all sufficient when compared to the genuine needs of developmental works in the State.

The platforms at railway stations of Thalassery, Vadagera and Koylandy are not fully provided with roofing which is causing much hardships to the passengers in rainy seasons. So, roofing facility should be given at these stations.

Sir, last year the Railway Ministry announced that it will start the survey work of three railway lines i.e. Thalassery-Mysore, Nanjanguad Nilambur and Thrissur-Kollankode. Even after one year the survey has not been completed. I request the Railway Ministry to complete the survey work immediately and start construction of these lines since the Malabar area is highly in need of this. In fact, from the period of our Hon. former Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri Ji, it was recognized by the Ministry but unfortunately the dream of the people is not yet materialized. Hence I request the hon. Minister to take immediate steps to complete the survey work of the Tellichery-Mysore, Nanjanguad-Nilambur and Kollangod-Thrissur and start the railway line immediately.

The survey work of Dindigul-Kumeli is reported as completed. Hence, the work has to start immediately as it will bring connectivity to the State and pilgrims to Sabarimalai from Chennai also will be benefited.

Sir, there is only one train from Kannur to Yeswanthapur that too a tri-weekly train to travel from the North Malabar area to Bangalore. This train is going only up to Yeswanthapur which is far away from the city of Bangalore. Hence, I request you to extend this train up to the city of Bangalore and increase the frequency of this train by making it a daily train. The number of daily passengers to the city of Bangalore and back to Kerala is increasing day-by-day. Large number of students especially in the I.T. sector and merchants are traveling to and fro to Bangalore as Bangalore has become an I.T. city in the Southern part of the country. Hence it is highly necessary to make the Kannur-Yeswanthapur Express as a daily train and it may also be extended up to Bangalore.

Considering the huge increase in the daily commuters of North Malabar area an inter city express from Mangalore to Calicut should also be introduced. Super fast train from Chennai to Mangalore also should be made a daily train considering the increase in number of passengers.

The long pending issue of electrification of Shornur-Mangalore line should also be considered urgently.

A very small portion of the doubling work of the railway line between Calicut and Kannur is left which should be finished immediately. The number of women passengers in all parts of the country is at an increase as the women of the country are compelled to travel to their work places, to the educational institutions etc. Hence I request the Minister, since he has introduced the Budget as women-friendly, to make more attempts to provide safety to the women passengers. The compartments reserved for women are too small that too with less passenger capacity. Only one compartment is reserved for women in almost all the trains. This is creating lot of problems. Hence I request the Hon. Minister to reserve at least two coaches for women in all the passenger trains. With these words I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR (Chandrapur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the Railway budget. I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister. I belong to Maharasthra and I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister for the concessions granted and the development work sanctioned with regard to my constituency. It has been my longstanding demand that a train should be run from my constituency to Mumbai. The hon. Minister has sanctioned a link train from Ballarshah to Mumbai. There was also a demand for a new line from the tribal region of Varsa to Aarumiri for which a survey was conducted earlier. The hon. Minister has made provision for this demand too in the budget. This is a tribal area rich in minerals. I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister for sanctioning a survey for a railway line from Ballarshah to Surjagarh and also draw his attention towards some works which are yet to be undertaken.

[Shri Hansraj G. Ahir]

Sir, I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister that he has sought fifty percent share from the state government for Versa-Aarmuri rail line but Maharashtra Government is not in a position to contribute that much. Versa-Aarmuri is a tribal district. That district can be connected by rail only if the Ministry of Railways makes 100 percent contribution on its part and provides for the amount in this budget. I do not think that Maharashtra government will be able to contribute its fifty percent share. I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister that in my area, a train Bhagyanagri runs between Hyderabad and Kagajnagar. South-Central railway and Central railway, both have sent proposals to extend this train upto Ballarshah but those proposals have not been approved yet. Similarly South-East-Central railway and Central railway both have sent a joint proposal to extend the train presently running between Gondia and Chanda Fort up to Ballarshah but both the above mentioned trains are not being extended because there is not pit line in Ballarshah. Please make a provision in the budget for pitline to be laid in Ballarshah.

Sir, earlier a train used to run from Ballarshah to Chandarpur and Ghugus but it was discontinued. Ghugus town has now become an industrial city. I request you to reintroduce the said train from Ballarshah to Ghugus. The railway line is still there and only goods trains are run on that line. Similarly rail line is already laid from Rajdura to Gadchandur via Ballarshah and I request you to introduce a passenger train on this route also.

Sir, I would like to tell the hon. Minister that my constituency is a tribal dominated area. You have sought fifty percent share from Maharashtra Government but the state government is not in a very good financial state. Rail over bridges and road over bridges are to be constructed in this area and kindly do not ask Maharashtra Government to give its fifty percent share because the state government would not give that and in that case all the overbridges will never be constructed. For Ghugus city in my constituency, please provide at least one. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: My dear friend, you may lay your speech on the Table of the House so that much time of the House can be saved. Precious time of the House can be saved if you lay it on the Table. You know that lakhs of rupees are being spent for holding the Parliament Session. If you could lay it on the Table, you will be doing great service to the nation. Every minute involves thousands of rupees of expenditure. If you lay it on the Table, that will go to the national exchequer.

[Translation]

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Sir, there has been a demand for Babupeth overbridge near which a big city is located and the state government has been evasive in giving funds for this purpose. Hence, I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to provide full amount of funds for the overbridge. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards some issues. Some works are unfinished and they need the hon'ble Minister's intervention. You have already done a great favour to me in the budget. I demand a shuttle train from Ballarshah to Nagpur, Chandrapur for which the GM has already sent a proposal to the Ministry of Railways. My demand is that the train running between Yashwantpur and Bilaspur should be extended further upto Howrah and this train should be run daily. There is a line which connects South and North and reduces the distance. Hon'ble Minister has made a provision for Nainpur and Jabalpur this time.

But it has been pending for long. Had more funds been provided for it, the work of Nainpur-Jabalpur line would have been completed. Varanasi and Balia bound trains from South presently ply via Nagpur. If these trains run via Chandrapur, my constituency, the distance will be reduced by 300 kilometers. I request him to provide more funds for it and get the work completed soon.

Sickle cell is a disease. The railways have provided concession for the patients suffering from many diseases like Anaemia, Cancer or Thalesemia. Similarly, I request the hon'ble Minsiter to provide concession for the patients suffering from sickle cell. ...*(Interruptions)* The students are facing a serious problem. Now-a-days the students travel to distant cities for studies. During holidays for any festival, they do not get reservation in the trains. As a result the students are not able to reach their homes. Hence the students should be given priority in reservation on the occasion of Dipawali or other festivals. I would also like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister of Railways towards this. ...*(interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Hansraj Ahir, all these points can be written in a paper and laid on the Table of the House. Why do you take the time of the House for speaking about reservation?

[Translation]

SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: I would like to thank the hon'ble Minister for sanctioning several projects for my constituency but I request him to complete the rest of the works.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Those hon'ble Members who have written speeches can read out one or two sentences and then lay their speeches on the Table of the House. That will be a greatest service to the nation because if you take the time of the House it involves huge expenditure.

[Translation]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL (Kopergaon): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me time to speak. *...(Interruptions)* I would like to thank the Minister of Railways, hon'ble Shri Laluji for presenting a surplus *...(Interruptions)*. He has not increased the fare of any class, rather has made all the people feel happy. *...(Interruptions)* I would like to remind the Minister of Railways, Sh. Lalu ji that during his Shirdi visit he had provided for Puntamba-Shirdi rail line and now a world class station is going to be constructed. He had ordered the officers to carry out the survey of Aurangabad-Rotegaon and Puntamba railway line. The traffic on Manmad-Daund railway line is increasing. The doubling of that railway line is going on since the 8th plan. He had asked the survey or to start the work and ordered for electrification of the railway line.

The second thing is that the survey of Mumbai-Kalyan via Ahmednagar rail line has been completed and this line is profitable. This line will be better used as freight corridor in view of industrialization taking place there.

There are industries on both the sides of Manmad-Daund rail line. Manmad Daund railway line was included in the 8th and 9th Plan but no action was taken till date. The electrification work of this line is also lying pending. When you visited Shirdi you had instructed the C.G.M., and G.M. for the said work who were also present there. I would like to request that kindly fulfill the promises made by you. There are several level crossings which are unregistered, unmanned and where security arrangements are needed to be done due to which five to ten people are killed in accidents daily. I would request you to get a survey carried out for overbridges on that route, though I have with me the names of all the ten overbridges. After construction of these overbridges the traffic at Kopargaon, Sehrampur, Rahuri, Shrigandha and Ahmednagar will be smooth and the locals will be benefited.

You have got a primary survey done. The survey of Nasik-Pune, Ahmednagar-Kalyan, Ahmednagar-Pune was referred to in the budget. But I would request you to give preference to Daund-Sholapur-Gulbarga rail line which has already been sanctioned but the work has not been finished during the seven years period due to shortage of funds.

I would not like to say much. You have already started three lines for Nasik-Mumbai but the traffic will not run smooth without the fourth line. Igatpuri and Nasik have already been covered. The third line is being started in Manmad. I want that there should be four lines. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI LALU PRASAD: People belonging to Bihar are being thrashed there. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Neither the people of Nasik nor the people of Jagtpuri attacked them. Even the people of Mumbai would not attack them, you don't worry. The attackers have fled away from there. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil, you address the Chair. You know it better than I know.

[Translation]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: It would be better if there are four lines on the route.

In the end, I would like to request you to introduce a 'Shahi Rath' or 'Shahi Express' from Delhi to Shirdi for the poor. Provide a 'Shahi Rath' or 'Shahi Express' for Shirdi as you have provided a Commonwealth train for Commonwealth games from Delhi to Pune. I would like to remind you whenever you go to Shirdi you always offer something.

In the end, I would like to request you to fulfill your assurances given till date. I am concluding my speech before time. Thanks.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. You have done it properly.

...(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Shri Ramdas Athawale to speak. Please be brief and to the point. You have got five minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Laluji's budget is a very revolutionary budget. It is a budget with an amount of 25000 crore rupees as profit in a year. Other people have been Ministers of Railways for several years but the railways never earned profit and always remained in loss. But, Laluji has done a miracle and made the railways earn a profit of 64000 crore rupees in four years. I just want to say that

Lalu Ki Profit Me Chal Rahi Hai Rail,
Unhone Kar Diya Hai NDA Ko Fail,
Isliye UPA Ka Bahut Hi Acchi Tarah Chal Raha Hai Khel,
Kyonki Laluji Ki Tej Chal Rahi Hai rail.

Laluji is a good human being. People have different perceptions about Laluji. We are fortunate to have an intelligent Minister of Railways like Laluji. He is a bold Railway Minister. Mr. Prime Minister is also bold. Soniaji is also bold. Sharad Pawarji is bold and I am also bold. All of us are working boldly. Laluji's budget is a common man's budget. He has introduced AC Garib Rath trains for the poor. There has been no increase in passenger fares and freight. The fare for AC Class-I and Class-II has been reduced. He has assured the unemployed people that they would be given the job of selling tickets. Food and beddings are to be provided in all the mail express trains. Lucknow Shatabdi Express will run at the speed of 150 km per hour. We also want that a similar train should be introduced from Mumbai to Patna because there have been a lot of disturbances in Mumbai. I invite all the people of Bihar and Lucknow to come to Mumbai as Mumbai is yours. All of you should come to Mumbai at the earliest and live there. This is not the right time to refer to this issue but despite that you have tried to give a lot to Mumbai. Mumbai and Patna need to be brought closer. Therefore, you need to give more to Mumbai. There is a narrow gauge workshop at Kulwadi in my constituency for which I had also a meeting with you in regard to gauge conversion. The people there have also been demanding it.

You need to take a decision on gauge-conversion of Kurduwadi narrow-gauge workshop. 200 to 300 acres of land is also available there. There is a long standing public demand for making Chandrabhaga Express a daily train plying between Pandharpur and Mumbai three days a week, at present. Likewise, Shatabdi trains need to be introduced from Mumbai to Akola, Kolhapur and Chankauli. A passenger train is also required on Sholapur-Pune route. There is a need to increase the number of general coaches in every train and I demand that every train should have 7 to 8 general coaches because the people buy tickets for these coaches but they do not get seats there. The engines powered by electricity or diesel can carry 25 to 35 coaches. Therefore, the maximum number of coaches should be attached to the trains. This train of UPA is also going to run for five years. Few people have tried to delink one or two coaches but Lalu Prasadji is sitting close to the hon'ble Prime Minister. Shri Manmohan Singh ji is not alone, therefore, this train is running smoothly. The survey of Pandharpur-Rodangir line has been completed and funds are needed for it. You have also to approve the new Mumbai-Kalyan-Ahmednagar line. Funds need to be provided for Nagar-Beed-Parli. Latur Mela is in my constituency and the work has been completed upto Osmanabad and Kurduwadi to Pandharpur and the work upto Kurdurwadi is to be completed. Now only the work from Kurduwadi to Meeraj is left and your cooperation is required for it. I sincerely thank you as you have worked hard for improving the railways. Let me recite one of my poems:

Rail Ka Mukabla Koi Nahi Kar Sakta,
Lalu Ji Ka Glamour Koi Bhi Pa Nahi Sakta,
Lalu Ka Mukabla Koi Nahi Kar Sakta,
Lalu Ji Ki Tarah Koi Chal Nahi Sakta.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: My Dear friend, please conclude. Nobody can compete with Laluji.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: None can compete with the railways, nobody can have the glamour of Laluji. Laluji shall stay but in the Ministry of Railways for the whole tenure of five years.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: From the very beginning you are congratulating Laluji. Let him be lucky enough to become the Prime Minister and then you can congratulate him more. Please conclude now.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: I am referring to important issues with regard to the railway budget. When I rise to speak, you start speaking but I respect you. I am concluding. Railways is a vast subject and there is a need to allot more time for the railways. Hence, I congratulate Laluji and support this budget. Laluji, you run the railways smoothly. If we form the next government, Laluji will be the Minister of Railways. He will enable the railways to earn a profit of Rs. 100-150 thousand crore in the next five years. The railways will run smoothly. We will go from Mumbai to Trivandrum and Kochin by train. I am thankful to Laluji.

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA (Rajkot): Sir, first of all I would like to thank Shri Lalu ji for having brought railways on the trach of profit and for having effected good improvements in its functioning. But, being in the opposition, I would like to tell Lalu ji, that time and tide wait for none. People expect the work of 20 years to be accomplished in just two years.

Therefore, my submission is why not introduce a public issue, whereby, Rs. 50,000 to Rs. one lakh crore can be mobilized. This amount can help in completion of 276 pending rail projects, out of which 93 relate to laying of new lines, 125 to doubling of tracks and 55 to gauge conversion. If a time bound programme is implemented for completion of these projects, say, in 5 or 10 years, it would help the people immensely.

I hail from Saurashtra region of Gujarat. Saurashtra is like North East of Western India. It has a coastline and touches Pakistan. Its coastline is 1600 kms. long. Several ports are being developed on this coastline. If all these ports are provided rail connectivity, it will generate adequate revenue for the railways. When Navlakhi port was provided rail connectivity four years ago the entire expenditure incurred thereon was recovered within eight months. Therefore, if all the ports are provided rail connectivity, the railway shall earn enough revenue from it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will be surprised to know that our rail network has shrunk since our independence. There were more than 200 princely states in Saurashtra. Entire rail network comprised of narrow gauge. But after independence our total railway network has shrunk by 386 kms. Therefore, wherever feasible, it shuld be converted into broad gauge. If the railway line is doubled, from Rajkot to Surendra Nagar, Viram Gaon entire Saurashtra will be benefited. People from Rajkot come to east India via Surendra Nagar and Viram Gaon. This project is still pending. The Railway Board took a decision in this regard six months ago, therefore, the work on this should be started immediately. If 100 kms. stretch of this track is doubled in the first phase, it will generate enough revenue.

Now, I would like to say something about the new railway lines in my constituency. My constituency can be directly connected to Mumbai. Since the proposal has been received, so I would not go into it. I would mention one more policy decision. Rajkot is Saurashtra's center, which has a coastline. Along the 200 km long coastline Okha and Dwarka are located on one side whereas, Somnath is located on another triangle 200 km stretch from Rajkot to Somnath, was converted into borad gauge line five years ago, but not a single new train has been provided on this route. All the long distance trains such as those from Haridwar to Okha, Mothihari to Porbandar, Guwahati to Okha, Banaras to Okha, Delhi to Okha are left with only half of the bogies with passanger and half of the bogies remain empty on arrival to their destinations. Eight bolges of a particular train are detached here only to be attached the next day. My submission is that if these eight bogies are attached to an extra engine and taken upto Somnath, a famous pilgrim center, it will benefit the devotees visiting Somnath. If the detached bogies of these weekly trains are directed to Somnath, seven new trains at low expenses will be available to the passengers round the week upto Somnath, Junagarh, Jaitpur. Therefore, I urge the Government to ponder over it positively. Adding more bogies may no doubt, be a safety concern, but the bogies will be put to use and facilites will be available to the people.

He has announced Garib Raths, but he has not announced any such train for Somnath Dham, Dwarka Dham or for Gujarat. I demand for a Garib Rath from Delhi to Somnath, no matter if it is a weekly one. Similarly, if Delhi-Ahmedabad Sampark kranti is extended upto Somnath, it would cover enough area of Saurashtra.

[Dr. Vallabhbhai Kathiria]

Secondly, Loco Wagon Factory has been announced to be set up in Kerala. Saurashtra produces more than 150 spare parts, right from wagon, tracks to other locomotive parts. If a railway wagon or a locomotive factory is set up in Gujarat it will not only benefit the railways but even industries over there will also flourish. I have been demanding for long a locomotive or a wagon factory in Gujarat.

Gujarat faces shortage of wagons during the onion or salt season and during that period, railways say that wagons will be available after a month. Onions get perished after a month. If a bribe of Rs. 10,000 is paid, wagon is made available in three days. Therefore, my submission is that extra wagons may be provided during onion or salt reason. Some trains have 12, some 16 and yet others have 18 coaches. If all the trains have 24 coaches, there will be no need to run more trains.

Bhavnagar and Rajkot Divisions are next to Ahmedabad Division. The rail length under Rajkot divison has shrunk. Both the divisions have 1900 km. rail length and out of it, 1200 km length is with Bhavnagar division and only 600 km. length is left with Rajkot. If one goes through the rial map, one would feel that linking Somnath and Porbander with Rajkot division would prove to be feasible from administrative point of view. Therefore, my submission is that the problem of this division may be solved.

In today's era of telecommunication, people still pull the chain to stop the train. I urge that latest communication facilities should be provided now.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The time is over, you donot cooperate. Please conclude.

[Translation]

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA: I have to make two pending demands. There is no train from Pune to Saurashtra, Rajkot, Porbander and Junagarh. More than 10 thousand students study in Pune. It will be convenient for the people if Ahinsa Express, a weekly train upto Ahmedabad, is extended upto Rajkot.

Similarly, Chennai-Ahmedabad Navjeewan Express, which halts for 12 hours at Ahmedabad should be extended upto Somnath. In fact, I demand that Navjeewan and Ahinsa Express should be extended.

Finally, I would conclude after making one more point. Railways have provided free rail passes to the girl students. It is good, but it is a reverse discrimination. Male students from a Pune college came to me and complained that girl students have been provided free rail passes and why not male students? We also travel by train. Today we need gender equality and not discrimination. It will be in the fitness of things if similar facility is provided to male students also. Hon. Lalu ji if you provide more facilities to Gujarat, railways will earn more revenue from there. With these words I conclude.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Members who are on the Panel of Chairmen are not readily available now. I will have to get some relief for five or ten minutes. With the permission of the House, I would request Shri C.K. Chandrappan to occupy the Chair for some time. I hope the House agrees with me.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now Shrimati Pratibha Singh may speak.

21.00 hrs.

[SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN *in the Chair*]

[Translation]

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH (Mandi): Sir, I would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for presenting the Rail budget for 2008-2009. He has tried to please people of all categories in the country and this budget has been welcomed by the entire country. The hon. Minister has nourished the railway department and has brought about financial reforms in it. He has successfully experimented new techniques to bring modernization and reforms in the railway system, for which hon. Minister and the department both deserve to be congratulated.

In the budget, fares have been reduced by 2 to 7 percent and a provision has been made for issuing free passes to girl students and halved the fare for senior citizens. I welcome it. Similarly, the announcement made regarding recruitment of five percent women as constables and ten percent as Sub-Inspectors, is also praiseworthy. The decision to recruit licenced porters as Gangmen and on other group D posts is also a timely and praiseworthy

decision. This will benefit the people of this category and also do justice to them.

Hon. Railway Minister has also announced the laying of new railway lines. After independence, there has been a lot expansion of railways in the country. Today, the rail network of India is the biggest rail network in the world but there has not been a balanced expansion of railways in the country. For example, the North Eastern states and hilly states like Himachal Pradesh have been ignored in this regard.

As on date, all the railway lines in Himachal Pradesh, be it Kalka-Shimla railway line or Kangra Valley railway line are all small railway lines which were laid during the British era. After independence, only one railway line is being laid and that is Nagal-Talwada railway line. Foundation of this railway line was laid by the then hon. Railway Minister Late Shri Lalit narayan Mishra ji decades ago but till date it has not been completed. The work is moving at a snail's pace. The reason behind this is that the Railway Ministry has neither given any priority to this line nor has made provision for enough funds. On our insistence the hon. Prime Minister had announced that this would be completed in two years time. That announcement has not been implemented so far. If the work continues at the present pace, then it will take another decade to finish the work. It is requested that sufficient funds may be provided so that the work on this line can be completed soon.

We are happy to learn that after much persuasion by the Congress Government of our state and all the hon. Members of the state, hon. Railway Minister has announced laying of another new railay line from Bhanupalli to Bilaspur-Bairi. I would like to thank the hon. Prime Minister and hon. Railway Minister for this. This was a long-standing demand. It is really good that the demand has been met now. The Congress Government of Himachal Pradesh has agreed to contribute 25 percent funds for laying of this railway line. Now the people of the state want that the work should be expedited on this line and it be completed soon so that the people and the industries set up in this area can benefit from it.

In Himcahal Pradesh there is a need for laying a new railway line which is small in length yet very important and this is Baddi-Chandigarh railway line. With this, the entire industrial area of Baddi, Barautiwala and Nalagarh will get connected to the broad gauge and this will benefit all the people of the region as well as the industries. This has been discussed a lot and this time we were expecting an announcement in this regard but we are disappointed. It is my humble request that this line may kindly be laid on priority basis.

Similarly, there is another long-standing demand of laying Jagadhari-Ponta Sahib railway line, which can be extended upto Dehradun. Our first Chief Minister, Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar ji had raised this issue for the first time but it is still pending. Attention should be paid towards this and a survey should be conducted. This railway line will link Haryana-Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

With these words, I strogly support the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister in this august House.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, Dr. K.S. Manoj.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (Alleppey): Sir, with your permission, may I speak from this seat?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Thank you, Sir.

I am thankful to you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Rail Budget for the year 2008-09. While congratulating the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Laluji and his colleagues Shri Shri R. Veluji and Shri Naranbhai Rathwaji, for making the Indian Railways into a profitable organization, paying dividend consecutive for two-three years without increasing passenger and freight charges, I would like to place on record my deep concern and protest against the move to privatize various profitable avenues of the Indian Railways.

My colleagues from Kerala have pointed out various requirements of my State. I do not want to go into those details. But I would like to reiterate the requirement of West-Coast Zone, which is a pertinent requirement of Kerala. In the coastal reach of railway line from Ernakulam to Kayankulam, the percentage of line utilization is more than 135, but the doubling process has not yet been completed. The doubling of line from Kayankulam to Ambalapuzha was announced in the last Railway Budget, But it is only Ambalapuzha reach, which is sanctioned. From Ambalapuzha to Ernakulam or Ernakulam to

[Dr. K.S. Manoj]

Ambalapuzha, the doubling process is not yet announced. We were expecting a declaration in the present Budget, but it was not there. Therefore, I would like to request the hon. Railway Minister to kindly consider the doubling of Ambalapuzha to Ernakulam railway line.

Sir, in the last Budget, there was a declaration that a joint venture company would be established with the Steel Industries Limited Kerala, Autocast Kerala at Chertala and the Indian Railways, but the process is moving in a very slow pace. Even the MoU has not been signed. RITES had done a study and submitted a Report; and the Government of Kerala has also made all the things available. Therefore, I would request the hon. Railway Minister that the formation and establishment of this joint venture company should be expedited. It should be formed without any delay.

Sir, the hon. Railway Minister had announced, as a part of safety measures, that a number of unmanned level crossings would be manned in the current Budget. In the section of Ernakulam-Trivandrum line, there are a number of unmanned level crossings. In the Budget, about the Trivandrum Division, there is a provision to man only nine unmanned level crossings. Similarly, there is a provision of inter-locking of around 15 level-crossings. My request is that this should be enhanced. All the unmanned level-crossings should be manned. Since, it is a very densely populated area, more number of unmanned level-crossings are there; and a good number of accidents occur there. Therefore, I would request the hon. Railway Minister that the number of unmanned level-crossings included in the current Budget should be enhanced.

Sir, there is a workshop for main line Multiple Electrical Units (MENU) and in the last Budget, there was also a declaration that electrical multiple unit established at Kollam. In Kerala, actually more number of short-distance trains are required. If the work at Kollam is completed, MEMU can be started as it would be of great benefit to the daily commuters.

21.09 hrs.

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan *in the Chair*]

Sir, in Alleppey, which is my Constituency, the medical college hospital was in the town, but now, it is shifted around 20 kilometre from the town. One medical college institution is there; one nursing college is there; a newly established bio instituted is there; and one paramedical institution is also coming up there. Therefore, if a non-block station is allowed at Vandanam, which is near the medical college hospital, it would be of great benefit to the patients and bystanders, who are coming there as also to the students and staff working in the medical college.

Recently, even though the process of doubling is not yet announced, the Railway authorities asked the residents residing near the railway line to cut down all the coconut trees and other yielding trees without giving any compensation. This has created a havoc among the people. Within 30 metres from the railway line, the coconut trees are there before the laying down of the railway line. But still, the authorities of the Southern Railway, Trivandrum Division have asked the people to remove all the coconut trees and other yielding plants and they were not given any compensation. This should be enquired properly and proper compensation should be given to them.

Sir, I have two or three more points to make. I am very grateful to the hon. Minister that the frequency of the Rajdhani Express running between Nizamuddin and Trivandrum is increased from twice a week to thrice a week. But, unfortunately, it has no stop at Alleppey. Sir, Alleppey is a very prominent place, a world-famous tourism destination. It is known as the Venice of the East and also known as the Paradise of the God's own country. The boat race of Alleppey is world famous and many tourists, both domestic as well as foreign tourists are coming to Allappuzha. The backwaters and sandy beaches and canals of Alleppey are very famous. Unfortunately, there is no stoppage of the Rajdhani Express at this station. When the frequency of the Rajdhani Express is increased, I would urge upon the hon. Minister that at least a two-minute stop should be there for this Rajdhani Express at Allappuzha.

Sir, the Nizamuddin-Ernakulam Mangala Lakshadweep Express is there. If that train is extended up to Trivandrum, it will be very beneficial for those non-Keralites who are residing at Delhi.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: Yes, Sir. I am concluding. I am on my last point.

The Inter-City Express running between Ernakulam and Trivandrum is very helpful for the daily commuters. But the number of coaches in that train is very limited.

Some 14 or 16 coaches are there. If the number of coaches in that train is enhanced to 23 or 24 coaches, it would be convenient. During the morning hours, heavy rush is there and so many accidents have occurred. I would request the hon. Minister to enhance the number of coaches in that Inter City Express from Ernakulam to Trivandrum. Moreover, there is no train in this route in the night, that is after 6 p.m. and till midnight. There are no trains from Ernakulam to Alleppey side in this time. In order to solve the problem, I have a suggestion. One train from Shoranur which terminates at Ernakulam may be extended to Alleppey. Then there will be a train after 6 O'clock in the evening. Or, one train which is running from Kottayam to Ernakulam which is also terminated at Ernakulam may be extended to Alleppey. If either of these trains is extended to Allappuzha, there will be one train available after 6 o' clock to the daily commuters.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

DR. K.S. MANOJ: I am concluding. I once again thank the hon. Minister for meeting majority of our requirements from Alleppey and from Kerala. He has especially announced a coach factory for Kerala. This process should be expedited and before the next Budget it should come up. Actually, our Chief Minister has already expressed his gratitude and offered his congratulations. We want that before the next Budget hon. Laluji should come there and should lay the foundation stone of the new coach factory.

I conclude now.

*SHRIMATI SUSMITA BAURI (Vishnupur): Expressing my deep gratitude to the Hon'ble Deputy Speaker Lok Sabha and my tendering sincere vote of Confidence to the Hon'ble Railway Minister Lalu Prasad Yadav, I commence my valuable speech.

Railway Budget 2008-2009 has created a mixed impact upon the Industrialist and general public at large. On the face of the budget it appears that the Hon'ble Minister has been able to meet the general demands of the public at large and to win the hearts of people belonging to different social strata by endowing various benefits upon aged persons and also upon the younger generation.

On the other hand, the Hon'ble Minister has totally overlooked the aspect of the needs of individual states specifically the state of West Bengal. Being a elected member of the Parliament from the State of West Bengal. I personally feel that the Hon'ble Minister should have given due consideration to the development of Communication system in the economically backward section of the state of West-Bengal is still remaining unfulfilled. Apparently the Railway Budget appears to be welcoming one, however an in-depth study into the Railway Budget revels various lacunas and defects the economy growth and Tourism industry of West-Bengal has totally been overlooked by the Hon'ble Minister.

The state of west-Bengal at large and specifically the dreams of the people of Bankura district have totally been overlooked.

1. The Long cherish desire of the economically week residents of Ranibandh and Ranipur are to lay down railway line running through their areas is still in dark. The Proposal to develop railway communication live from Tharagram to Purulia via Ranibandh and Bankura have not yet been given a final shape inspite of repeated demands.

2. The Proposal to renovate the railway station at Peerdoba and to make the station a regular stoppage for express train specially ruasi Bangla and Purulia Exp. have not been taken into consideration.

3. Bankura Stataion to be included in the list of stoppages of New Delhi- Bhubaneswar Raj.

4. The Extension of Railway line already existing between Raniganj to Mejia, to be extended upto Bankura to develop interterritorial trade and Commerce.

5. The work of laying railway between Bankura to Munkutmanipur to be expedited.

6. The Project at railway line from Vishnupur to Tarekeswar within a short period of time.

7. Last but not the list the Hon'ble Minister should make endeavor to arrange more fund for the development of Communication system of west-Bengal.

Expressing my deep gratitude to the learned Deputy Speaker Lok Sabha and by expressing my sincerest thanks to the Hon'ble Railway Minister Mr. Lalu Prasad

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Smt. Susmita Bauri]

Yadav and by keeping faith in the progressive of the Railway Minister, I would like to put an end to my speech.

[Translation]

*SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly): Hon. Railway Minister, Sir, I would like to demand quick redressal of grievances and appropriate action to be taken with regard to some major problems related to my constituency.

The Mechanical Workshop, N.E. Railway, Izatnagar, Bareilly is on the verge of closure for want of work. Earlier there were more than 1000 employees working here but their number is decreasing continuously. Whereas the railways considered this as the best place for setting up a coach factory but a decision could not be taken due to political reasons. Therefore, it is requested that attention should be paid towards this and a factory should be announced for this place. Similarly, gauge conversion of railway line between Izatnagar workshop and Bareilly Junction should be carried out immediately.

In the past (during summer) a Shatabdi train was introduced on Delhi-Moradabad-Bareilly-Lucknow route which was accepted very well. The said train has now been discontinued. It is requested that this train may kindly be reinstated at the earliest.

A number of trains are running between Lucknow and Moradabad via Chanheti-Chandausi-Moradabad. All these trains which do not come to Bareilly, should be given a halt at Chanheti railway station and it should be developed as Bareilly Cantt. This is a long-standing demand.

Doubling of the Delhi-Moradabad railway line should be done on priority basis and completed in a fixed time frame.

The proposed gauge conversion of Kathgodam-Lalkuan-Bahedi-Kosi-Mathura route should be completed in a fixed time frame on priority basis.

The gauge conversion of Bareilly-Pilibhit-Mailani-Lakhimpur-Lucknow railway line should be started and completed soon keeping in view the need for the same. Keeping in mind the need for construction of a Rail Over Bridge at Izatnagar, Heartsman, Katghar (cremation ground) railway crossing in Bareilly, it should be constructed on priority basis.

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*Speech was laid on the Table.

Bareilly-Shyamganj railway station is not being used and there is a lot of encroachment on the vacant land there. This is situated in the middle of the city. The encroachment on this land should be removed immediately and commercial complex constructed at this place.

Bareilly is a big city, therefore, keeping the population of the city in mind, a booking agency should be opened in the middle of the city.

Tin sheds should be constructed on platform numbers 2 and 4 at Bareilly Junction. The absence of tin sheds here causes a lot of inconvenience to the passengers.

I am enclosing certain other demand received by me from my constituency.

Doubling of Delhi-Moradabad railway line should be completed on priority basis and within a fixed time limit.

The proposed gague conversion of Kathodam-Lalkuan-Bahedi-kosi-Mathura route should be completed in a fixed time limit on priority basis.

Keeping in view the necessity, the gauge conversion of Bareilly-Pilibheet-Malani-Lakhimpur railway line should be done immediately.

The construction of ROB (Rail Over bridge) at Ijjat Nagar, Heartman, Katghar (cremation ground) railway crossing in metropolitan city Bareilly should be done on priority basis.

Bareilly Shyamganj railway station is not being utilized properly. Vacant land there has been encroached upon. It is located in the middle of the city. Encroachments should be removed immediately and a commercial complex be constructed there.

Bareilly is a metropolitan city. In view of its population, a city booking agency should be opened in the center of the city. Platform Nos.2 and 4 of Bareilly junction should be covered with a shed. Passengers are facing problems in the absence of tin sheds.

Now I am presenting the demands received from my parliamentary constituency:-

1. A broadgauge train should be introduced from Bareilly to Kanpur via Lucknow. Till now the train is running on a metercgauge line via Kasganj. It takes a long route, much time and charges higher fare.

2. Due to gauge conversion, all the meter gauge trains are going upto Mathura only. At present, there is no meter gauge train for Agra. Therefore, the frequency of the passenger train between Bareilly and Agra via Chandausi on broad gauge should be increased. In addition to it, an express train upto Agra via Chandausi should also be made available.

3. Intercity Express should run in the morning between Bareilly and Lucknow. At present, passengers have to travel in sleeper class due to unavailability of seats in the morning in Punjab Duplicate or Kisan Express. Often TTE charges money from the passengers illegally.

4. The train No.3289 which runs from Rajendra Nagar (after Patna) to Jammu Tawi does not have any stoppage at Bareilly. After Lucknow it stops only at Moradabad. This train should be provided stoppage at Bareilly also and its frequency should also be increased so that people of Bareilly could get a train upto Jammu to visit Vaishno Devi.

5. Lucknow-Jammu Tawi superfast express should be introduced from Parliamentary constituency of hon. Shri Atal Bihari ji. At present passengers are facing a lot of inconvenience as the trains going upto Jammu Tawi via Lucknow often runs late by many hours. There is no train for Jammu Tawi which starts from Lucknow.

6. Passengers have to stay awake for the whole night for the Nauchandi Express, the only train available from Bareilly to Meerut. As Bareilly is an important business place, therefore, an express train either from Bareilly or from Lucknow should be introduced for Meerut in the morning.

7. Jan Shatabdi Express and a superfast train should be introduced from Delhi to Lucknow via Bareilly so that the people of Bareilly could reach these places in short time paying less fare.

8. The days of train No.4115 Allahabad Haridwar Express should be increased and it should run daily to provide more facilities to the passengers.

9. A survey should be conducted for a new route to connect Bareilly to Kanpur. At present, the gauge conversion between Kanpur and Farrukhabad is going on speedily. On the other hand, a broadgauge line is already existing from Bareilly to Meeranpur Katra. If after conducting a survey, Meeranpur Katra is connected to Farukhabad (approx. 75 kms.) through broad gauge in near future. It will earn large revenue for railways through trade and travel as it will connect the largest Mandi of Uttar Pradesh, Kanpur to Bareilly.

If Railway Department says that there is shortage of coaches, it would be worth mentioning here that Triveni Express remains stationed at Bareilly for 20 hours, Lucknow-Chandigarh Express for 14 hours and Pushkar Express remains stationed for about 10 hours. Some more trains remain stationed at Lucknow for 10-16 hrs. Running these trains between Bareilly and Lucknow will facilitate the passengers and also provide income to Railways.

Sir, I am not only hopeful but also confident that he will take up all these issues in public interest and bring necessary amendments in railway budget for the same.

Sir, it is requested that Bareill/Puri/Bhubaneswar Neelanchal Express 8476 which runs between Delhi and Puri via Kanpur and Lucknow should run from Kanpur instead of Delhi via Bareilly and Lucknow. I am submitting the following facts in support of my request:-

The following major institutions of Government of India are located in Bareilly:-

(1) Air Force, Bareilly

(2) Army

(3) Indian Institute of Veterinary Research

(4) Central Bird Research Institute

(5) Railway Department

(6) BSF

(7) IFCCO AWLA

Students from Orissa, West Bengal and Bihar etc. pursue their studies at Indian Veterinary Research Institute.

The following trains are running between Delhi and Bhubaneswar:

1. New Delhi Puri Express train No.2816 via Kanpur-Allahabad.

[Shri Santosh Gangwar]

2. New Delhi Puri Express train No.8476 via Kanpur and Lucknow.

3. New Delhi Puri Purshottam, Express, No. 2802 via Kanpur Allahabad.

4. Nizamuddin Bhubaneswar Express train No. 8406 via Mathura and Agra.

5. New Delhi Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express train No. 2422 via Kanpur-Mughalsarai.

6. Nizamuddin-Puri Express train No. 8478 via Mathura and Agra.

None of the above mentioned trains goes via Bareilly. Very humbly, it is requested that, at least, the route of Delhi-Puri Express train No. 8476 running between New Delhi and Bhubaneswar via Kanpur and Lucknow should be changed. Instead of New Dlehi it should run from Kanpur to Bhubaneswar via Bareilly and Lucknow. It would be an appropriate step as it would not only facilitate the students studying in Bareilly but the people living in cities, towns and villages of Delhi, Bareilly and Luknow will also get facility to go to Puri.

I hope that while considering it favourably, he will pass an order to run the 8476 New Delhi-Puri Neelanchal Express from New Delhi to Puri/Bhubaneswar via Bareilly and Lucknow.

I would like to bring to his notice that northern railways culvert No. 103 is located on the main road in Mohalla Garinath of Bareilly. A Railway line passes over this culvert and people move from one side to other from beneath the culvert. It is an age old culvert and is narrow also due to which people are facing lots of difficulties in movements.

The upline of the said culvert with a width of 20 feet was built in 1995. But the old line laid prior to it, is only 10 feet wide due to which traffic jams are very frequent there. Approx. 5 lakh people up-down daily from this area. Since long people of this region have been requesting for leveling of this culvert and widening of the small part of it. On the basis of the letters written by me in this regard, the Railway Department understood the importance of this work and in January, 2007 the Divisional Engineer, Bareilly, U.P. forwarded a letter No.024/015 dt. 25.1.07 allocating a sum of Rs. 15 lakh for repairing the said culverts, to the Divisional Manager, Moradabad.

I would like to request you to instruct the officers concerned to undertake broadening of the narrow part of the said culvert on priority basis keeping public interest in mind.

I would like to draw your attention towards the need to increase the frequency of train number 2435/2436 New Delhi-Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express which runs only on two days a week. Since this train runs only on two days a week, the people who have to travel on other days face a lot of difficulty. If the frequency of this train is increased it would benefit the people travelling on this route and the railways would earn additional revenue. I request you to issue orders to increase the frequency of this train in public interest.

Efforts for getting gauge-conversion of Bhojipura-Pilibheet-Tanakpur and Pilibheet-Shahjahanpur-Lucknow railway lines sanctioned have been on for many years. As a consequence, in the previous budget, hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri R. Velu, had given the assurance that both the main metergauge lines in Pilibheet would be included in the railway line conversion scheme and that assurance has been fulfilled.

Beautification of Bareilly Junction railway station, the major railway station of the Northern Railways, has been halted. It should be completed immediately.

A policy decision should be taken about opening of railway ticket counters at educational hubs of the country such as Bareilly, Noida and Greater Noida etc. and special arrangements should be made for large number of rail users from these places during holidays.

Appropriate action may be taken on the above-mentioned matters and I may be informed of the decisions taken in this regard.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am happy to announce that dinner is ready. Hon. Members, members of the staff and members of the Press are welcome to dinner in Room Nos.70 and 73.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me time to speak

on the Rail Budget. I would like to thank hon. Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad ji that he has started Swantantrata Sangram Express from Jhansi to Barackpore on the occasion of 150th anniversary of the first war of independence. It should be given a halt at Ait junction too. At the time of elections to legislative assembly during the previous year, the hon. Minister had visited my constituency Kaunch. The people of the constituency had asked the hon. Minister to bring Kaunch station on the main line. Since elections were round the corner it would not have been appropriate for the Minister to make any announcement. Therefore, he told the people that he had noted their demand and would consider it after the elections. Hon. Minister, your election meeting in Kaunch had been attended by people in large numbers and they had placed this demand before you when elections were about to take place. But since it was election time he could not have aceded to the demand. He had merely said that he had registered the demand in the computer and would consider it at a later date. We want Kaunch station to be shifted on the main line between Kanpur and Jhansi stations. If Pirona is linked to Kaunch and Kaunch is linked to Ait, then Kaunch will come on the main line. At that time the hon. Minister had given us assurance and I am sure that he will fulfil his assurance. There is one Urai station in Jhansi division in North-Central Railways. Udyog Nagri, Lucknow Express and Poona Express trains cross that station. These trains run from Lucknow to Kanpur and Jhansi without halting anywhere. Urai is a district headquarters and at a distance of 200 km. Hence, these trains should definitely be given stoppage at this station so that serious passengers who have to travel upto 50 km or 100 km may board the train from there Train No.2944/2943 comes from Balsad to Kanpur and halts at Urai but the passengers have to buy tickets from Kanpur. If these people want to buy tickets from Balsad to Urai, they won't be able to buy tickets for Urai they will get a ticket upto Kanpur or have to deboard the train at Jhansi. Hence, hon. Minister, the passengers should be able to buy tickets from the station the train stops. Doubling of Jhansi-Kanpur line should be done since doubling of any line which remains 100 percent busy is sanctioned under the prescribed norms. The percentage of that line comes to 118.7. Hence, doubling of Kanpur-Jhansi railway line should definitely take place. A morning intercity should be started between Kanpur and Jhansi. If the said train cannot be started for some reason then extension of Delhi-Kanpur Shram Shakti Express upto Jhansi may be considered. This train remains halted for seventeen and half hours at Kanpur. Hence, if this train is extended upto Jhansi it would benefit the people of the region as there is no direct train for Delhi from any place under 200 km from this region.

Hon. Minister, Sir, the Kaunch-Ait shuttle should be extended upto Jhansi. PRS and EPS systems have been sanctioned and made operational in Kaunch, Ait, Kalpi, Pukhraya and Moth. Computerisation should be carried out in those stations so that people could take benefit of computerized reservation system. A lot of trains run between Kanpur and Jhansi. In some places people who have bought tickets for general coach are allowed to sit in sleeper coaches during day time by paying some extra charges for which they are given a receipt.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Cochin and Pushpak Express should be given stoppage at Ait junction. Overbridge at Urai station should be extended beyond the platform. Overbridge should be constructed at Rath Road Crossing in Urai. All passenger trains should be given a halt at Usargaon which lies between Urai and Kalpi stations where a halt station is being constructed. There used to be a station there earlier. Hence, trains should be given a halt there. AC Chair Car has already been sanctioned on Jhansi-Kanpur Intercity. It should be attached to the train at once and it should be given a halt at Moth station. There is a bridge near Kalpi station. If the level of road under bridge is deepened by one foot it will open up a passage to 100 villages nearby.

I hope that hon. Minister would definitely consider this suggestion. I had raised the demand for a railway line between Kaunch and Oraiya Dibiyapur station last time. A survey for the said line had been conducted in 1977 when the Janata Party government was in power. Thereafter, some earthwork had also been carried out. If this line is constructed, traveling for people of Bhed-Jalaun, hadrukh-Kototh and Oraiya would be made easier.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is a never ending process. The, demand for Railways will never end. Hon. Member, please give it in writing to the hon. Minister.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

*SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA: A survey of Bhind to Mahoba via Orai has been conducted. This new line should be laid which would connect Madhogarh, Jalaun by rail. Durg Express running between Kanpur and Durg stops at Mohda. This train should be provided a stoppage at Ghatampur station because the distance between Kanpur and Mohda is 100 km and Ghatampur is in between. The passengers at Ghatampur would be benefited *there from*. There is no provision of drinking water and electricity at Ghatampur. Hence in view of the problems faced by the passengers water and electiricty should be provided there at the earliest. Udyognagari 2173 starting from Mumbai Kurla terminal and Lucknow Express 2107 should be stopped at Thane station. Facilities of reservation in the trains stopping at Orai and Ait station should be made available at Konch till Konch station is linked with main line. Gwalior-Chhapra mail has been running late by seven to eight hours for the last one and a half year. Hence punctuality of this train should be ensured. The poor people of Gwalior or Banda board the Jhansi-Kanpur – Pooja Express (Intercity) because of the wrong nameplates placed on the above mentioned train. Hence night name plates should be placed on the above mentioned train. Kochin express should be provided stoppage at Kalpi and Pukhraya.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now nothing will go on record except the speech of Shrimati Jhansi-Lakshmi Botcha. Mr. Verma, you have laid it on the Table of the House.

... (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA (Bobbili): Hon. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the historic Railway Budget for 2008-2009 presented by the hon. Railway Minister Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav. After listening to the comments made by the Opposition Party Members in the House, it is very clear that they are also, by and large, in support of the Budget except for a few drawbacks and lacunae at the field-level like cleanliness in the compartments and on platforms, and other infrastructural drawbacks.

Here I want to quote Mahatama Gandhi. He said: "If you want to please all, you will please none". Shri Lalu presented a people-friendly Budget; an *Aam Aadmi* Budget with Indian Railways Vision 2025 in mind to satisfy the aspirations and necessities of huge cross-section of the people across the length and breadth of India.

Indian Railways is part and parcel of every Indian citizen, that is, for a billion plus population. Over 8,000 passenger trains are being run daily, but it is still not enough for 18 million who travel by rail every day. They can look forward to the rail system achieving higher and higher goals.

The following features of the Railway Budget, 2008 are worth mentioning to streamline the things, and improve the existing passenger amenities. Multi-pronged scheme to strengthen Railway safety through automatic devices like anti-collision device; online monitoring of rolling stocks through acoustic bearing detectors and wheel impact load detectors; EOTT devices; digital ultrasonic flaw-detecting machine; fire resistant material to be used in coaches; more ROBs and RUBs to be constructed; unmanned level crossings at busy sections to be manned on a fast-track basis; green toilets in 4,000 coaches; and one-time exercise of appointing Railway porters working on stations as gang-men and Group D posts after due screening. Here I want to stress that these people should be re-trained before deploying them for the new jobs.

Concession to senior citizen women above the age of 60 has been enhanced to 50 per cent from the existing 30 per cent in rail fares; free MST to girl students up to Graduation-level instead of 12th standard, and for boys up to 12th standard instead of 10th standard; and AIDS patients traveling to nominated ART centres for treatment to be given 50 per cent concession in Second-Class passenger fares.

Ashok Chakra awardees are also to be provided the facility of travelling in Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains on card passes issued to them. In this connection, I would request the Railway Minister to extend concessions to all police officers who are awarded the President's medals. The police staff and officers are playing a crucial role in maintaining the internal security and law and order. Their services should also be recognized by the Railways.

Measures to reduce queues at railway ticketing counters, which includes increase in UTS counters to 15,000 and ATVMs to 6,000 over two years' period, tickets' booking on mobile phones, etc., are welcome steps.

*This part of the speech was laid on the table.

**Not recorded.

Tickets on "Go Mumbai Card" which integrates rail and road transport is definitely a welcome step.

I thank the Railway Minister for sanctioning Kothavalsa-Vizianagaram new line in my constituency, for introducing Garib Rath between Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam (tri-weekly) and for upgradation of Secunderabad Railway Station to international standards. The Garib Rath train between Secunderabad-Visakhapatnam may be extended up to Rayagada Station to cover Bobbili parliamentary constituency, Parvathipuram parliamentary constituency in Andhra Pradesh and Koraput parliamentary constituency in Orissa. People of these constituencies would remain eternally grateful for this.

Now, I would like to place some important proposals before the House for the kind consideration of the Railway Minister. The consideration of these proposals would meet the aspirations and demands of the people of Andhra Pradesh, particularly the people of my Bobbili parliamentary constituency.

- ROBs and railway sliding;
- Important stoppages; and
- East Coast Railway should be carved out from South Eastern Railway and merged with South Central Railway, which is the long pending demand of the people.

Before I conclude, I would like to say that the Indian Railways should reflect the enterprise of new India, and it must live up to the world standards, with faster, lighter and cash rich features.

*I lay the following proposals on the Table of the House for the kind consideration of the Railway Minister to meet the aspirations and demands of people of Andhra Pradesh, and particularly my Bobbilli parliamentary constituency.

East Coast Railway should be carved out from South East Railway; and Merged with the South Central Railway.

ROBs at the following locations:

1. ROB at Pedamanapuram on N.H. 43 in Gajapathinagaram assembly segment of my Bobbilli parliamentary constituency.
2. ROB between Bobilli and Donkinavalasa: Rly K.M. 413/11
3. ROB at Bheemasingi between Alamanda-Korukonda: Rly K.M. 831/3.
4. ROB between Ponduru-Sigadam in Srikakulam district Rly. K.M. 766/27-29

Railway sliding at Vizianagaram Market yard

1. Viziangaram Railway station is a big junction for where people found to Orissa, West Bengal, Assam, etc. states and to Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh etc., States have to change over here. The existing 2 Reservation counters beside the one intended for physically Handicapped and the ladies are always over crowded and are not sufficient to cater to the needs of the people requiring reservations. There is absolute need of at least another Reservation Counter to facilitates obtain reservations with in the time limits fixed to keep there counters opened for the public.

Similarly there is also need of providing one more general counter also as the present two counters are not at all enough to cater to the needs of people requiring tickets for the general compartments.

I wish to state in this context that Viziangaram Railway station is a big Railway junction and the minimum income of this station is stated to be Rs. 5.00 lakhs a day. But, the existing amenities at the Railway Station are not sufficient to cater to the comfortable and convenient requirements of the traveling public. So, in the interest of providing better, convenient and comfortable train journey facilities to the people of the vast area in my Parliamentary Constituency and these; of the neighboring districts, there is absolute need of providing the above facilities at the Viziangaram Railway Station in my parliamentary Constituency.

Further, there is constant demand from the public for the halt of the following express trains at Viziangaram Railway Station.

1. 2841/2842 Coromandal Express
2. 5929/5930 CEN DBRT Superfast
3. 2662/2664 Howrah-Tirupathi Superfast bi-weekly.
4. 2666/2665 Howrah-Kanyakumari Weekly
5. 5629/5630 CEN-NGC

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Smt. Jhansi Lakshmi Botcha]

3. Extension of the Visakhapatnam-Nizamuddin, Nizamuddin-Visakhapatnam No. 2808 train up to Vizianagaram as several passengers from Vizianagaram are suffering a lot to catch the said train at Vizakhapatnam Railway station, which is about 50 kms away from Viziangaram.

4. Extension of starting and the terminal point of Janmabhoomi or Ratnachala Express trains from Viziangaram Railway station which is a junction of so many trains coming from Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Kolkata states and as such extension would be more beneficial not only to the people of Viziangaram and Srikakulam districts but also to those of the other states.

5. Electrical Multi Unit in between Visakhapatnam and palasa is running presently for 6 days in a week except on Sundays. To facilities the passengers traveling to their respective places on Sunday running of this train on Sunday is also necessary.

6. The Cheepurupalli Railway station which is the main base for the people of the villages of all the 8 surrounding mandals to board the trains bound to Viziangaram, Visakhapatnam up to Hyderabad and up to Bhuvaneswar and Kolkatta etc., cities., does not have the minimum facilities and amenities required by thousands of passengers, although it has got maximum sources of income through its passangers. Under these circumstances, the people of Cheepurupalli and those of the 8 surrounding mandasl represent that the following facilities may be provided at the Cheepurupalli Rly. Station.

1. Extension of foot over bridge up to police station way.

2. Arrange ladies waiting halt in VIP Langue.

3. Stoppage of the following trains:

(a) Falaknuma Express Train No. 2703/2704

(b) Konark Express Train No. 1019/1020

(c) Prasanthi Express Train No. 8563/8564

(d) Vascodagama Express 2847/2848

(e) Pondicherry Express 2897/2898

(f) BBS-CEN Express 2829/2830

7. Providing of a request stop at Maradam Dathirajeur Mandal Viziangaram district of the DMU Train No. 471 and Train No. 472: Vijayawada-Rayagada and Rayagada-Vijayawada as the stoppage would be most beneficial to the Nos of passengers from Maradam and several other surroundings villages as well.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Minister Shri Velu has come. I have taken note of it.

Now, I give the floor to Shri Mohan Rawale. Please be brief because I am helpless in your case.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE (Mumbai South Central): Sir, I am speaking after a long, long time in Parliament and that too on this Railway Budget.

[Translation]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to tell the hon. Minister of Railways that I am a Member of Parliament from Mumbai. Everyday one crore and twenty lakh people travel throughout the country whereas 65 lakh people travel in Mumbai only. These passengers do not have facilities. You have not reduced the fair of suburban trains but announced 300 new trains. I would like to know as to when the passengers are likely to get these trains along with the names of the originating stations of these trains. Please furnish the details thereof.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the tracks on which the trains are running, are so dilapidated that accident can take place any time. Those tracks have outlived. Hence I would like to submit that Mumbai needs more trains. Besides, the train service from Virar, Borivali, and Andheri to Kasara, Kalyan, Dombivali, Thane, Ghatkopar needs to be increased. Presently 657 crore rupees are required for MUTP whereas 342 crore rupees have been allocated in this budget. As this is the second phase, the funds are needed and the total cost of the project is 1740 crore rupees.

I would like to tell the hon. Minister that the trains running on the Harbour line crossing through my constituency are very dirty and the rakes of these trains are in a dilapidated condition. Whenever new rakes are available, first introduce them on this line. I would also like to request you to run 15 coaches trains in place of 12 coaches if it is feasible. It should be ensured that wherever platforms are constructed sheds are also constructed there.

Sir, the hon. Minister has paid no attention to Konkan. Recenly I travelled by Konkan-Kanyakumari train. That is a very old train.

21.31 hrs.

(MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

Janshatabdi is another train. A lot of dust comes into this train. The quantum of dust coming from outside into general compartments is so much that it turns your white clothes black. I would request you to provide air-conditioned coaches in that train. Please introduce a Garib Rath upto Madgaon which we need the most.

Sir, recently I have read in a newspaper that recruitment should be done through local employment exchange. A law was passed by Lok Sabha in 1959 that every recruitment should be done through local employment exchange. If the recruitment takes place in Punjab then it should be for the Punjabis, if it is in Tamil Nadu then it should be for the Tamil people, if it is in Gujarat then it should be for the Gujarati people, Marathi people should be recruited in Maharashtra and the Malyali people should be recruited in Kerala. In every state local people should be recruited. It has been passed in the Parliament but nobody adheres to that. The Railway Manual provides for recruitment through local employment exchange. It would not cause injustice to anybody and there will be a social harmony in the country. I am telling this in regard to the recruitment of class III and Class IV employees. The recruitment of these categories used to be done through local employment exchange till four or five years ago but now recruitment is done on all India basis. Where would the local people go? The recruitment for class III and class IV in Central Railway is about to be made for which applications have been invited in February. There is a Marathi Deputy Chief Personal Manager Mr. *...(Interruptions)** He has been transferred deliberately.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Name will not be recorded.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Because some people do not want that local people are recruited. Please get it investigated. He has been deliberately transferred to Mantunga workshop. I request the hon. Minister to transfer him back. I will lay the remaining issues on the Table.

*Not recorded.

Sir, there are many jhuggi-jhopadis on railway land. Maharashtra Government has passed a law that the jhuggis on government land constructed prior to the year 2000 will not be demolished until sufficient land is provided for rehabilitation. The Jhuggis in Nala Sopara area in Maharashtra have been demolished. Exams were being held. The children were upset due to dislocation. I phoned the officer there. The officer Mr. *...(Interruptions)** told me that we could go anywhere, he could do nothing as he had the orders of the court.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Name will not be recorded.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded.

*...(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am talking about whole of the country and not about Maharashtra and Mumbai alone. Was the recruitment board not attacked in Bangalore? Everyone wants to live peacefully in the whole of India but people of every state should get priority in their respective state.

I am talking about slums. I request you to talk with them for providing them sufficient land. You should talk to the Maharashtra Government or any local Government there. *...(Interruptions)* Maharashtra Government has recently regularized the slum clusters, which had come into being till 2000. *... (Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay rest of your speech on the Table. You have already taken more than 13 minutes. I am sorry. It is not possible to allow you further.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rawale, this point of yours has already come on record.

...(Interruptions)

*Not recorded.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay it on the Table. *[Translation]*

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: I want to praise him. He has talked about Kho-Kho for which I want to thank him. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Please speak in favour of Bihar. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: In Bihar, the local people of Bihar should get priority - what is wrong in this? I did not say that we should be given priority. *...(Interruptions)* Fifty five thousand persons had been called for the posts of Assistant Loco Pilot, but only 44 persons from Maharashtra out of 55000 were selected - how is this possible? I want to thank you from the core of my heart for showing courage of forming a Kho-Kho team, which nobody could do so far. You should also form such teams, for both women and men, in the Western Railway, Central Railway and Konkan Railway. Similarly, Kabbaddi teams should also be formed.

Now, I lay the remaining speech on the Table.

*Sir, there has been a total neglect of the Mumbai local trains and the passengers. Local trains of Mumbai are the lifeline of Mumbai, which is called the economic capital of India. But, with deep regret, I am saying here that the hon. Railway Minister has disappointed the passengers of the local trains in this railway budget. About 1.20 crore passengers travel by train in the country - with 65 lakh passengers in Mumbai, 20 lakh in Kolkata and 9 lakh in Chennai. Thus, a total of 94 lakh passengers travel in local trains which is 75 per cent of the total number of passengers and the Railway Minister has forgotten these very passengers this time.

A total of Rs. 3490 crore were sanctioned for various railway related works in the last year's railway budget. An amount of Rs. 1740 crore out of that has not been spent yet. Is this the efficiency of the Railway Ministry? Hon. Railway Minister had announced 157 new trains in Mumbai last year. Where are these trains? This year, he is saying that local trains will run 300 times. Will the hon. Railway Minister please tell as to when and how this will happen?

Today, the situation is that the number of passengers is increasing by leaps and bounds. There is a need to increase railway services to Kasara, Karjat, Kalyan, Dombivali, Thane and Ghatkopar. Railway administration is watching the problems and difficulties of the passengers everyday but does not appear to making efforts to address them. We met the General Manager, Railways but he curtly replied that railway services would be increased when the rakes are available. Now, when and how these rakes would be made available?

The rakes running on the tracks today are old and outdated. There is a need of new rakes not only for central and western railway routes but also for the harbour route as the condition of rakes there is extremely pitiable. These coaches carrying lakhs of passengers are so dirty that no sign of cleanliness could be seen anywhere. Does the Railway Ministry want to play with the life of the railway passengers.

The demand that these rakes, bringing maximum number of passengers to their destinations, should be of 13 coaches is so old that I feel hesitation to repeat it. Now, there is a need to make rakes of 15 coaches even if the length of the platforms has to be increased for it. When will the work in the direction of increasing the number of railway coaches be started? Sheds should also be provided for the platforms which have already been extended.

Konkan Railway has been forgotten in this budget. The way it is proving its utility, the railway Ministry should also pay more and more attention to it. Holi special trains have been provided on every route but why this facility is not provided in Konkan region? These trains do not have sufficient number of coaches. It is necessary to increase the number of coaches in these trains in accordance with the demand of the passengers.

The Railway Ministry is gearing up to increase the problems of the railway employees. It wants to close its printing press and outsource the work. It is an anti-worker policy and we oppose it. Rail Kamgar Sena had raised its voice against these efforts as back as in 2002. But, the Railway Administration is adamant to close the printing press and increase the problems of its employees. Does the Railway Ministry want to invite unfair practices and bribery by outsourcing this work from private agencies? It is true that these press employees will be absorbed somewhere else but it will create more problems.

The responsibility of the employees is far greater in the Health Department. The recruitment of workers in

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

this field by the contractor is to play with the lives of the patients. Therefore, closure of printing press and privatization of catering services, recruitment of administrative employees and safari karmcharis should be stopped.

Similarly, I would like to tell the House about the corruption in recruitment of the Assistant Loco Pilot and Trade Apprentices. Railway Recruitment Boards select the candidates for the vacancies arising due to retirement or other reasons. Zonal Railway administration appoints the candidates selected by the Railway Recruitment Boards to the Railway Services. But, it is now seen that efforts are being made to recruit the candidates selected by the RRB of other regions at the cost of the local coandidates. It is a wrong step and should be stopped. Providing recruitement opportunity to be local candidates alone would be proper. The post of Loco Pilot is not a technical post, therefore, ITI should not be a necessary condition for it. Under this policy, eight percent Maharasthrian candidates should be recruited in the railways. The wards of the railway employees should be given priority in the recruitment.

New coupon vailadting machines should be installed at every station if the railway services are to be made efficient for serving the common man. Foot over bridges should be constructed on sides of every station. A doctor and an ambulance should be provided at every station.

'Neera' sales counters, which are lying closed should be reopened. Indian sports should be started and promoted in railways. Many thanks to Indian railways for introducing games line Kho-Kho, Kabaddi.

There is no shade on platform at Nahur station in Mumbai. Every station should have clean toilets. All the problems being faced by Konkan railways should be solved. I hope the hon. Minister of Railways and his Ministry will make all out efforts for providing better facilities to the public.

The Central Railways is going to start recruitment process for filling up 6500 vacant posts in near future. A local Marathi officer Shri A.K. Pandharkar, who is working there, is being shifted from there just to deprive local Marathi people from being recruited and also because candidates from outside can get a chance. I think it is a violation of rights of locals. It is the duty of the railways to give priority to the locals.

The people of Chinchpokali area in Mumbai have sought expeditious completion of a foot overbridge from Khamkar Road to Namjoshi Marg.

Vacant railway land in Mumbai is inundated with slums. Slum dwellers, who had constructed slums on the said land before 1995 have been rehabilitated elsewhere by the Government of Maharashtra, but there is no coordination between center and state government over such an important issue. Again the slums in Nallah Soyara were demolished. The examination of their children were going on. My submission is that the railways should resort to demolition of slums only after providing them alternative plots elsewhere.*

SHRI DHARMENDRA YADAV (Mainpuri): Sir, the hon. Minister of Railways has been presenting surplus rail budget for the last many years. I do agree that he has brought the railways on the right track to a great extent. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways to a specific problem. Lakhs of passengers in the country who can neither afford AC class nor sleeper coaches travel in general compartments could not attract the attention of the hon. Minister. 80 percent of the passengers travel in general bogies, which comprise only 20 per cent of the total bogies and on the contrary 80 percent of the bogies are reserved for rest 20 percent passengers.

Sir, through you, I would request the hon. Minister of Railways to provide more number of general bogies in long distance trains. Often it has been observed that there are long queues in front of general bogies and police have to control the rush. The bogies get so much congested that no one can move inside the coach. I hope the hon. Minister will surely pay attention to it.

Sir, on the one hand, the railways has been in profit constantly, whereas, on other hand there has been no addition to the infrastructure facilities being provided such as sanitation, catering etc. I would urge the hon. Minister to improve the standard of food being served from pantry car in long distance trains as standard of food being served is not that good. Therefore, the hon. Minister should take effective measures in this regard.

Introduction of Garib Raths is quite an ambitious project, but I have a complaint in this regard. Garib Rath trains cross several important stations in U.P. but do not stop. I not only hope, but I am sure that the hon. Minister will sanction stoppage of said trains at Tundla, Ferozabad, Sikohabad and Etawah also.

[Shri Dharmendra Yadav]

Sir, I demand extension of Etawah-Mainpuri railway line, which is under construction upto Gajrola via Itah, Badayun, Sambhal. Secondly, the work of Etawah-Agra via Fatehabad should be completed expeditiously, also the work on Etawah-Guna via Bhind, Etawah should be completed expeditiously and in a time bound manner. It appears from the report presented in the rail budget that the work of the said projects is not going on in a time bound manner. I hope the hon. Minister of Railways will pay heed to it.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to my parliamentary constituency Mainpuri in U.P. There is only one train, *i.e.* Kalindi Express for this area. It runs between Delhi-Kanpur, via Shikohabad, Farrukhabad. Though it is express by name, but its speed from Shikohabad, Farrukhabad upto Kanpur is slower than that of a passenger train. The speed of this train should be increased. Secondly, other trains meant for Mainpuri district, whether they are for Agra or Lucknow, should be connected to Mainpuri.

Sir, earlier, Kalindi Express was scheduled between Delhi-Farukhabad, has been extended upto Kanpur. Well, it has been extended upto Kanpur, but the number of bogies remain the same, whereas the number of passengers has increased. Therefore, in view of inconvenience being caused to the passengers, I would request the hon. Minister to increase number of bogies in this train. Further, I would also urge for upgradation of Mainpuri railway station, which is in my parliamentary constituency and also for fulfilling other demands of this area relating to railways.

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL (Latur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on important Rail Budget. I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways as he has made efforts to present a good rail budget. He has announced several new trains which include thrice a week new train from my constituency Latur and district Osmanabad to Hyderabad. I would like to thank the hon. Minister in this regard. He fulfilled my demand partially but I am very sad to say that I had repeatedly demanded for a train from Osmanabad-Latur to Tirupati as thousands of devotees visit Tirupati to worship Balaji. Therefor, I again urge the hon. Minister to start a new train between Latur-Tirupati.

Sir, Latur is a backward area and affected by earthquake but educationally this district is on top in whole Marathwada region. People from across the country come here to study. I urge the hon. Minister of Railways to make Latur and Udgini railway station as model stations and in view of popular demand inquiry counters should also be set up there so that people can have trains related information. I had written to the hon. Minister time and again and I personally met him with regard to construction of an over bridge in Udgini tehsil under my constituency as thousands of people walk on road and often accidents take place. Therefore, I urge the hon. Minister to construct an overbridge so as to avoid accidents there.

Sir, the hon. Minister has turned the railways around but it is not good to ignore the basic needs in order to earn profit. Incidents of loot and theft on trains are being reported every day. It is important to check these problems and present a good picture of railways. There is a need to pay attention towards cleanliness on railway stations and particularly towards the food and drinking water being served in the trains. Just two days back all the trains coming to Delhi were stopped out side the station and during this period there was no food and water for the passengers but there were no officials to listen to their woes. The quality of food that is served on trains is extremely sub-standard. Even the committee constituted in this regard has accepted that the food served on trains is not worth eating. Therefore, it is required to improve this. I would like to urge hon. Minister that there is a need sanction a Rs. 100 crore project for Kurdwadi railway workshop where wagon repair work is done. I would like to request the hon. Minister that there is a need to connect South-Central railways because some part of Udagirao and Nanded is connected with southern railways. Our people have to face language problem over there, therefore, it is required to pay attention towards this also.

SHRI VIJAY BAHUGUNA (Tehri Garhwal): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there has been an all round development in the four years of UFA Government and a glimpse of that can be seen in the rail budget. Shri Lalu Prasadji has presented a very praiseworthy budget, therefore, he deserves to be congratulated. The Railways play an important role in the economic growth of the country and, in this context, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister and say that the people of hilly states of Himalayan region believe that they are deprived of railway services. I would particularly like to draw your attention towards Uttarakhand state as there is a lot of potential

for tourism in this area. There are holy pilgrimages of all the religions in this place and the natural beauty is as good as Switzerland but there are no railway services available in any of the hilly districts. You had recently visited Kedarnath and this had raised the hopes of the people that you would get a survey conducted as to what are the possibilities of railways to reach Nainital, Almora, Telhri and Rudraprayag in Garhwal and Kumaon divisions. It is my humble request that a survey should be conducted and efforts made to make the railways reach the people in hilly districts of the state. I would like to suggest that a Grand Himalayan Rail Corporation should be formed on the lines of Konkan Railway Corporation and Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, in which funds should be mobilized from public and private enterprises through IPOs so that the railway facilities could be made available to the people of hilly regions. I am extremely grateful to you for proposing a new railway line from Dehradun to Kalsi in Dehradun district, which also includes tribal areas like Jaunsor and Bhabar. Tourists from all over the country and from abroad visit Dehradun but the railway station there does not have a shed cover due to which passengers get wet during rains. It is requested to you that Dehradun Railway station should be modernized and a Yatri Niwas should be constructed there so that the passengers visiting the place do not have to face any difficulties. I had also requested you that Rishikesh is a place of religious importance. A number of trains come upto Haridwar, if some of these trains could be extended upto Rishikesh then it will benefit the passengers immensely. I would also like to urge you that there are certain bridges on the Dehradun track due to which the traffic gets jammed.

It is my humble request to you that flyovers may kindly be constructed in Lacchiwala and Raiwala so that there are no more bottlenecks in that area.

I would like to express my gratitude to you for presenting such a budget in which attention has been paid towards the convenience and safety of people of all classes. I am extremely hopeful that in the next Rail budget, facilities would be provided for the Himalayan states and particularly for Uttarakhand so that the economic backwardness of the area could be overcome.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Lalu Prasad ji, I have received a request that the game of tug of war which is played in our Punjab, Haryana, U.P. must also be played in your area. You have given concessions to the sports persons, therefore, there is a demand that railway concessions should also be given to the players who visit other states to play tug of war. I had received this request from them and I have forwarded the same to you. Kindly pay attention towards that also. Tug of War is played in your state also. Now it has been recognised at international level which is why they want this. I had received their representation and I have forwarded the same to you.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: I have received that and I have done the needful.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is their demand. He has linked Amritsar and Anandpur Sahib with Patna Sahib for which the people of Punjab are thankful to him. I have said in Hazoor Sahib also that Lalu ji has linked Amritsar and Anandpur Sahib to Hazoor Sahib, Patna.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: We will introduce trains from Delhi also.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now a train will be introduced from Delhi also. In that regard, they are demanding that the concessions to be provided should be on the general fare and not three times, four times of the same. This is their request.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE: Lalu ji has been doing a lot for sports. He has done for Kho-Kho what could not be done in 15 years. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It is true, he has done a lot for the players. I had received a representation from the tug of war players, I have told you about that.

*SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Hon'ble Sir, I rise to participate in the discussion relating to Railway Budget 2008-2009. Though this Budget promises to reduce passenger fares and provide permanent jobs to the porters, I fail to support it whole heartedly because promises are not always fulfilled. In the last four years under the UFA regime, no new projects have been taken up for West Bengal. This state has been deprived. Even for completion of ongoing projects, adequate funds have not been allocated. It is very unfortunate that though all the representatives from West Bengal met Hon'ble Minister and asked for providing licenses to the railway hawkers to protect them from police harassment, nothing of it is reflected in the Budget. A formula was also chalked out

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Bengali

[Shri Sunil Khan

but to no avail. The hawkers too are poor people. However I thank you for your concern for sperts activities.

But the two companies viz Burn standard and Braith waite which manufacture wagons, have not been included in your agenda whereas Bharat Wagon has been listed in railways. Here too West Bengal has been neglected. Not only that you have announced that stations like Mumbai will be turned into world class stations but the big stations of Howrah and Sealdah find no mention in your Budget. So West Bengal has been deprived of everything.

Few months back, while laying the foundation stone of an ROB in Durgapur Hon'ble Minister of railways had announced before eight to ten thousand people about the introduction of a train linking Durgapur and Howrah. Now the Budget is silent on that. Though initially passenger fares and freight charges are reduced in Budget, after some time, by trick these are again increased. 200 express trains have been converted into superfast trains – fares have also been raised but passenger amenities have not improved on January 2, 2008 classifications of cement, clinker and iron ore were changed. Resultantly freight charges have increased. Same is the case with steel and coal.

Running time of express train is 55 Km and that of superfast train should be 75 Km. But, running time of these superfast trains is still 55 Km. Passenger amenities are not upto the mark. Even in Rajdhani trains, there is no space to hang clothes, toilets are very cramped, bogies are not spacius. When suddenly brakes are applied, there is a push due to the absence of bogey coupler as a result of which we cannot eat peacefully. Quality of food is deteriorating day by day. Particularly in Sealdah Rajdhani, food is very poor.

Safety charge for 2001-2002 has been calculated to be Rs. 17,000 crore. Now from Rupee one it has been raised to Rs. 100 in the name of developmental surcharge. What safety measures have been taken with this amount? The surplus shown is not real. The operating cost is shown to be 76% under the 11th five year plan, it is said that Rs. 2,50,000 crores are required. Our party leader has mentioned these. So I am not repeating those points.

You are an icon of liberalization policy and are re-sorting to public-private partnership. Earlier there were 22 lakh jobs. Now the number is fourteen lakh six thousand four hundred. You are now saying that canteen and printing press will be privatized. If that happens more people will loose their jobs. Recruitments are not made, vacancies are not filled. In sealdah-Howrah division a driver works for ten to sixteen hours. Therefore accidents take place regularly.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please lay it on the Table of the House.

SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Sir, give me only five minutes more.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. You may lay it on the Table of the House. It is not possible for me to give you more time. Please conclude now.

[Translation]

*SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Due to paucity of time. I shall be brief. I would just mention of a few project trains. Since 1996, I have been asking for the completion of survey work of the Beliator-Durgapur line before the linking of Burdwan with BDR. If that is completed then you complete Beliator so that this will be the gateway of South India to North East.

Two years back the Raniganj-Bankura survey work has been taken but still it is incomplete. If that is done then the revenue will also increase and the various ferro and sponge iron factories and collieries will also in benefit of that area. The Government is talking about the North-East but nothing has been done for that region. The Kumarghat to Agartala line is yet to be completed for development of North-East, railway connectivity is required for Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram. To boost trade relations with China, Myanmar, Thailand and Bangladesh through railway network, Siliguri can be developed as the gateway only boosting of Look East Policy will not be enough.

To encourage tourism in the district of Bankura, the Maoist movement has to be checked and construction of Bankura-Ranibandh railway line is to be taken up urgently. Adra-Jhargram railway track is also essential. Durgapur should be developed as model station. There should also be a station in Kondaipur between Mankar and Paraj. A station is to be set up at Chanditala between Galsi and Khana junctions so that the farmers are able to market their produce in Burdwan and Durgapur to cater to the

... This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

needs of the oil companies in Rajbandh, so the level of the platform should be upgraded as it was very low. For students and tourists of Shantiniketan, some trains need a halt at Panagarh station. A Howrah-Mumbai train via Durgapur- Nagpur should be introduced immediately.

Now, I would like to cite an example of the service provided by the railways. On 28/02/2008 a ticket (first class) was booked in Darjiling Mail in the name of a Member of Parliament and for a companion in second class for the date 05/03/2008 to come from New Jalpaiguri to Sealdah. I was given a side berth in the AC-II compartment and the companion was denied any berth at all while some passengers and M.L.As. were allotted seats after filing complaint at 8 pm, after boarding two berths (one first class and the other second class) were arranged at 9.30 pm when two passengers did not turn up. If this is the plight of Member of Parliament, what could be the condition of a common passenger. There is orruption in reservation of seats in NPG. Proper inquiry should be conducted to nab the culprits.*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

... *(Interruptions)***

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can lay it on the Table. I cannot give you a single minute more. Shri Khan, nothing is going on record.

... *(Interruptions)***

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is what I am requesting to you. I would request the hon. Members that those who want to lay their written speeches, may lay them on the Table. That will form part of the proceedings.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, thank you very much. I convey my heartiest congratulations to hon. Lalu Prasad Yadavji for presenting this railway budget. The budget presented by him has provided relief to the common man, therefore, he deserves congratulations. But I have a complaint also. Sambhal city is comprised of population of four lakh and it is minorities dominated area. Then Hasanpur and Gajraula cities are situated there. Earlier also, I have made this demand a number of times, Prof. Ram Gopal Yadav ji had also demanded it and Shri Amar Singh ji had made this demand in Rajya Sabha. I had received a letter from him also in this regard stating that connecting Sambhal to Gajraula via Hasanpur will incur a cost of Rs. 104 crore. The people of this area are demanding it for long. Laying of this line can boost the development of Sambhal and the entire adjacent areas. Though Sambhal is a big trade center and despite a large mandi of Mehtha, Potato, Wheat and sugar located there, it is still a backward place in the absence of this line.

22.00 hrs.

He had made a commitment to approve this line. But there is no mention in the budget about it. Therefore, I would like to submit that Sambhal is a historical place in Moradabad district. It had been the capital and thereafter became a province under Mughal Empire. Today it is a Tehsil in Moradabad. Moradabad is my parliamentary constituency and Sambal is my hometown. Therefore, I have keen interest in it. Hence, I request the hon. Minister to fulfill my demand for laying a railway line from Sambhal to Gajraulla via Hasanpur in this budget so that Sambhal could be connected to the main line. People of Amroha, Hakim Mohammad and Uvais Sahib etc. had come to me with a memorandum. They also want that Amroha should be connected to Aligarh via Sambhal ...*(Interruptions)* Just now, Shri Dhanendra ji was also demanding. I request my respected and veteran colleague Shri Lalu Prasadji to fulfill this demand of Sambhal.

Doubling of Hapur-Moradabad line is going on at a slow pace. The track there is in very bad condition and not being maintained properly. This work should be accelerated so that the line could be put to use. The distance between Moradabad and Delhi can be covered by train in two hours but at present it is taking four hours. People are facing problems due it. I would request the hon. Minister to pay utmost attention to it to solve the problems of the people. In addition to it, I would also like to submit that recruitment of Muslims in Railways is negligible. Therefore, Muslims should be provided with reservation quota for jobs in railways so that they could also get employment opportunities. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: He has not conveyed thanks for what has been done for Muslims.

DR. SHAFIQUR RAHMAN BARQ: That is right. I have spoken about that. ...*(Interruptions)*

**Not recorded.

[Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq]

I thank him and hope that the budget presented by Shri Laluji would be implemented and the places which have been left would be given due consideration. It would be a great job if Sambhal is connected to Gajraulla via Hasanpur.

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH (Bhind): Sir, I rise to oppose this railway budget. Though people are appreciating this budget but I would like to tell the hon. Minister that the people for whose cause he has been fighting throughout are facing hardships in trains. Only a few people travel by AC coaches. However, the number of general bogies in which ordinary people Travel, who cannot even afford reservation, is being constantly reduced. Now the need is to provide more facilities to these people. Only then the steps like not increasing the fare and showing railways in profit would prove to be meaningful.

Many hon. Colleagues have mentioned that standard of cleanliness and the quality of food is deteriorating. The bedroll and other accessories given during journey are also of poor quality. Attention should be paid to all these things. People appreciate his management but it is not as good as being praised. Therefore, there is a need to improve the management. I would like to tell him to pay special attention towards it. As there is paucity of time, therefore, now I would like to make few submissions about my constituency. The work on Guna-Etawah railway line was started around 25 years back but was left incomplete. When NDA Government came to power and I was elected as a Member of Parliament from there, I made all out efforts to get this work restarted. The work was restarted speedily but now the work has been stopped again. It has been completed upto Bhind. Only one pillar on Chambal bridge and track upto 15kms. is to be constructed from Bhind to Itawah. Due to this unfinished task, this line is of no use. The completion of this work will connect us to Kolkata. Bhind is a backward and dacoit infested district. Employment opportunities are inadequate there. People of this district go to Kolkata and Ahmedabad in search of employment. In the previous budget also we have requested to extend the Bhind-Kota railway line upto Ahmedabad. It would benefit the 80% people of this district who go to Ahmedabad to find employment. The railway line from Bhind to Kota is not much beneficial to us. Connecting it from Kota to Ahmedabad will definitely benefit us.

I would also like to submit that a survey for laying a new railway line between Bhind, Orai, Mahua via Rath was conducted. After condcting the survey the project worth Rs. 465 crores has been prepared. Last time also I had requested but due to some reasons it could not be included in the budget. This time also it has been left out. Therefore, I would like to request him to include it in this budget as it will pave the way for the development of this area. It would also benefit Bhind and Jalaun, which are most backward areas.

Secondly you have announced a Gwalior-Bhopal Intercity train, which has not been started yet. I would like you to get it extended upto Bhind. If an intercity runs from Bhopal to Bhind, it will definitely benefit Bhind. Similarly, Datiya falls in my constituency. The Minister of State for Railways had announced construction of a bridge in Datiya. I had also forwarded the communication received in this regard to the Minister but this work has not been mentioned anywhere in the budget. I had discussed the matter with the hon. Minister. He has again given an assurance in this regard. He had given assurance earlier also but perhaps later it slipped his mind. But now I hope that he will include this proposal in the current budget ...*(Interruptions)* I will conclude in a minute. Sonagiri in my constituency is a Jain pilgrimage. People belonging to the Jain community visit this place from all over the country. People of that place want Taj Express to be given a halt there. I would like to request you to provide one minute stoppage of Taj Express there. All of our Jain brethren would be most grateful to you. Similarly, there is a small station, Basai, between Lalitpur and Jhansi. People have been demanding stoppage of Jhelum Express at that station for a long time. The entire region is isolated from the rest of the area, so the people would be benefited if stoppage is provided to Jhelum Express there. He should provide for stoppage of Kerala and Sachkhand Express there because people from all over the country flock here to pay homage at Maa Pitambar Peeth. He has haw given this sort of facility to Datiya. I hope that the hon. Minister will accede to our demands.

*I stand to oppose the Railway Budget because the tactic of not increasing the fares has been adopted as a populist measure and the issue of sanitation and safety has not been addressed at all.

Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister towards my constituency. Construction of Guna-Etawah railway line had been started 25 years ago. This line was to be completed by 2005.

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*... * This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

When the NDA government had been formed the erstwhile Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayeeji had instructed that the stipulated date of completion of the railway line should be advanced to 2003 and accordingly work on the line was speeded up. This line was completed upto Bhind by 2003 and operationalised.

However, work on the line has not moved forward since 2004 when the UPA government assumed power even though merely 15 km of track remains to be laid to link Bhind and Etawah.

Sir, I have met Shri Lalu Prasadji many times, after he assumed the office of Railway Minister, and brought to his notice that the Guna-Etawah railway line is important not only for Bhind but for the whole of Madhya Pradesh because this line links MP with UP and even West Bengal. After repeated requests the hon. Minister held a meeting with the officers concerned and instructed them to start work on the line expeditiously and he also gave me an assurance in this regard. The hon. Ministers and the officers had said that work on the line would be started within a month but neither this work has been started nor budget allocation for the purpose made. I am sure that the hon. Minister would leave political considerations aside and allocate funds for this railway line in the national interest and in the interest of the backward and dacoit-infested area of Bhind in Madhya Pradesh.

Secondly, in 1998 the then Prime Minister had announced a new railway line from Bhind to Urai via Mahoba on demand of the people for which survey had been completed in 2007. Project cost of this line is Rs. 465 crore but the line is a necessity for both Bhind and Jalaun districts. Hence, I would like it to be included in the budget. The Railway Minister had given me an assurance in this regard earlier. Sir, Datiya district also comes under my constituency. It is known for Maa Pitambara Peeth throughout the country. People from all over the country visit Datiya to pay homage there. The erstwhile Minister of State for Railways had announced construction of an overbridge there but no allocation has been made for the purpose yet even though this bridge is a necessity. Funds may kindly be allocated for this purpose too.

When I had last met the hon. Railway Minister I had requested him to upgrade Datiya railway station and the Minister had assured me that he would look into the matter. But neither any action has been taken in this regard as yet nor has any mention of the matter been made in the budget. Datiya station may kindly be included in the list of stations for upgradation.

Sir, people from all over the country visit Datiya to go for 'darshan' of Maa Pitambara, hence the demand for stoppage Sachkhand and Kerala Express here is a long standing one. Last time the hon. Minister had given an assurance in this regard but stoppage of these trains has not been provided yet. Kindly make sure that the above said two trains are given a stoppage here so that the pilgrims are facilitated.

Sir, I would like to make another request to the hon. Minister that my constituency has another Jain pilgrimage in Sonagiri which is visited by Jains from all over the country. There is a demand to provide stoppage of Taj Express at this station. Kindly provide stoppage of the train at Sonagiri.

Sir, in my constituency Basai railway station falls between Jhansi and Lalitpur. Demand for stoppage of Jhelum Express at this station is also a long standing one. Kindly give this train a one minute halt at Basai station.

Sir, I would again like to make a request to the hon. Minister regarding Bhind. Bhind is an extremely backward and dacoit infested area. Neither any irrigational facilities nor any employment avenues exist here. I had requested the hon. Railway Minister last time also to extend the train which runs from Bhind to Kota upto Ahmedabad. The hon. Minister has given me assurance that the train would be extended but this has not happened so far. I would like to reiterate my request to the hon. Railway Minister since 80 percent people from Bhind go to Ahmedabad to get employment.

A train which runs from Gwalior to Chhapra should be run from Bhind to Chhapra. Many people from Bhind go to Kolkata in search of employment. Hence, I request that the Chambal Express which runs from Gwalior to Howrah should also be run from Bhind to Howrah.

I would also like to request the hon. Minister that the new Gwalior-Bhopal intercity which has been announced should be run from Bhind to Bhopal.

In the end, I would like to say that you have been very generous. You have given something to every section

[Dr. Ram Lakhan Singh]

of the society. But you have not made any announcement of any benefits for the journalists who publicise your achievements. Kindly grant 50 percent concession on reserved and unreserved tickets for accredited journalists. Presently they have to pay the full amount for reservation of seats in trains.*

SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE (Dhule): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

I rise to support the rail budget. Laluji has presented the fifth budget in the House and the people of all the sections in the country have welcomed the budget as it embodies the ideas of betterment of common man. Like absorption of the coolies, providing relief to senior citizens and making efforts for bringing the railway in profit. I thank you and your colleagues for all this and pray to God that may God bless you to do more good to the people of the country in future. I have little time, hence I would like to draw your attention to some issues pertaining to my constituency.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You lay your written speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE: Sir, give me two minutes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Alright. You may speak for two minutes.

SHRI BAPU HARI CHAURE: Sir, there has been a very old demand of my constituency in regard to new rail line from Manmad to Indore. When accompanying MLAs of my constituency, I went to see Laluji, he promised to take up the work if we submitted a letter of fifty percent sharing from Maharasthra Government. We made a request to the Chief Minister of Maharasthra in this regard and Shri Vilas Rao Desmukh, Chief Minister of Maharashtra and Shri Jayant Patil agreed for it. Thereafter Laluji assured to sanction the new line and take further action. Hence I would like to thank Laluji on behalf of the people of my constituency. There has been no provision for this railway line in this budget, hence I request Laluji to take further action and make a provision for it in the supplementary budget after approval. Dhule city is a corporate city having about four to five lakhs population. I demand to introduce a new train from Dhule railway station. The Railway Board tells us that Dhule station has no facilities for example the length of that station is short, there is no provision for cleaning A.C. coaches there. Hence I request you to augment the facilities at Dhule railway station. Godawari Express running between Mumbai and Manmad should be extended upto Dhule. Pune is an important city from educational point of view as an I.T. park is situated there and everyday people go to Pune from Dhule in 25 to 30 luxury buses. Hence, I demand that a coach should be attached to Maharashtra Express. Similarly Nagpur is a very large city in Maharashtra and a large number of people from Nagpur go to Dhule. Hence a coach should be attached with Sevagram Express. Dadar-Amritsar (1057-1058) Express goes via Dhule and this train has one three tier A.C. coach and one sleeper coach but the waiting list at Dhule is very long. Hence I demand that another sleeper coach should be attached to this train so as to provide relief to the people going to Mumbai. I had demanded in the previous budget session also that a new train should be introduced from Mumbai to Nandurbar or Bhusawal via Surat. A train named Khandesh Rani runs on this route. It would facilitate the public of Khandesh and Southern Gujarat to go to Mumbai. I demand to introduce a Garib Rath from Bhusawal to Mumbai. ...*(Interruptions)*. This area is one of the backward areas. You have addressed Manik Rao Gavitji's concern by doubling Udna-Jalgaon line and I thank Laluji for that.

[English]

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget 2008-2009. I am speaking on behalf of Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam headed by my beloved Leader Thiru Vaiko, Leader of the Tamils world over.

Sir, broad gauge conversion is pending ever since Independence and no work so far has been done except some works towards conversion of BG, and they are making estimates and all that. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to take up the broad gauge conversion as early as possible and complete it as early as possible and that has to be done from Dindigul to Palani, Pollachi-Coimbatore, Pollachi to Palghat. This is a very important area. Palani is an important pilgrim centre. Pollachi is a tourist centre. There is a wild life sanctuary. There are many dams attracting visitors all through the year.

Further Sir, when Salem Division was formed, the Kinathukadavu and Pollachi areas were handed over to Palghat Division of Kerala. This was neither informed to

me nor was I consulted. The people are very much worried over it.

Sir, there is a stretch of railway track and management from Tirunelveli-Nagarcoil up to Kanyakumari, which is also with Thiruvanthapuram Railway Division. That also should be taken back and handed over to Madurai Division of Railways.

Sir, with these few words, I wish to conclude and lay rest of my speech on the Table of the House.

*Sir, my constituency is Pollachi which was previously a part of Madurai Division of Southern Railways. But when Salem Division of Railways was formed Pollachi and Kinathukaduvu area of Railways track and management was shifted to Palghat Division in Kerala without any consultation or information to the people's representative, to me as Member of Parliament elected from that region.

Sir, we welcome the formation of Salem Division of Railway which has been a long pending demand of tamilian people. But without any reason Pollachi Kinathukadavu has been handed over to Kerala. This is not a correct decision and *it* is against the will of the area.

Some Hon'ble Members from Tamil Nadu and Kerala have signed that paper relating to the transfer of these areas. I do not know how they could be authorised to sign such records which relate to transfer of an area to the Palaghat Division in Kerala, which was earlier in the Madurai Division in Tamil Nadu. My people are very much disappointed and also are worried about the fact as to how an area in Tamil Nadu can be handed over to another Division in Kerala without consulting the person who has been elected by them. This is a real concern of the people of my area. In protest against this our Chief Shri. Vaiko had done a rail roko agitation on 19-9-2007 and for four days my Chief Shri. Vaiko also went round the villages enlightening them that in no way the local MP was consulted or informed about the transfer of that area to Palghat Division. Hunger Strike was carried out one day on 4-10-2007. Our Party also did a mass rally in Pollachi demanding that Pollachi and Kinathukadavu area should be brought back to either Madurai Division or Salem Division.

Further my Constituency Pollachi is a trade Center well known for coconut trees, agricultural lands and an Industrial area in the Coimbatore District, Tamilnadu. It has five irrigation dams and a wild life sanctuary for tourist attraction, it has a population around three lakhs with 80 major villages. Tirupur, a big knitting and garment manufacturing industrial area with enormous export potential is nearby to Pollachi, Coimbatore District. Coimbatore, Calicut and Cochin are nearby Airports. Our town has vital importance over goods transportation as it lies in the middle of many important routes. We have about 2 crores of Coconut trees, the products and Bi-products of the coconut have to be transported throughout the country, Coir products have very good export potential.

Palani is a very famous pilgrim Centre, Topslip with the Indira Gandhi wild life sanctuary, Valparai with Tea and Coffee estates are important places of tourist interest. Further Amaravathi Dam, Thirumoorthy Falls and Dams Aliyar, Soliyar and Parambikulam Aliyar Project, Walayar Dam in Kerala nearby to Poliachi are attracting tourists during all the seasons of the year.

The good old meter gauge of 140 KM stretch of Coimbatore-Dindigul and 40 KM stretch of Poliachi-Palghat should be converted as Broad Gauge which would help the public, trade, industry and the agriculture in these areas by establishing a link and easy access other parts of the country.

Our Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri. Lalu Prasad and Hon'ble MOS for Railways Thiru R. Velu have announced Rs. 30 crore during the budget 2007 - 08. In this budget also in order to take up and complete the BG conversion from Dindugal - Poliachi via, Palani, from Poliachi - Coimbatore from Pollachi to Palaghat, enough money should be taken from the Central Railway Allocation through Planning Commission. I wish and request on behalf of the people of my constituency to take up and complete the BG conversion as early as possible.

The stretch of Rail track and management of 89 kms of Tirunelveii -Nagarcoil - Kanyakumari section in Tamil Nadu area is at present under Tirvandrum Division of Kerala. This length of area is being neglected in welfare projects in these Railway Stations, left as un-cared of area by the Trivandrum Division. Railway Users and People of these area are finding it as step-motherly attitude by the Trivandrum Divisional Head. People are agitating against the inhumanly attitude of the Railway authorities. Therefore they urge upon the Government of India, the Central Railway authorities to part away this area from the Trivandrum Division and get it attached with Madurai Division for better care and management.*

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL (Katwa): Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, I rise to take part in the debate on the general discussion on Railway Budget for the year 2008-09.

Firstly, I want to say that the Budget has some important as well as positive features, especially where people are suffering from all round price rise, the reduction in passenger fares will certainly provide some relief to the people concerned.

But in spite of this, it is a matter of sadness that some important on-going projects, as I know, in West Bengal are absent in the Budget. One of such projects is Bandel-Katwa Rail link having a long standing burning problem of not getting doubled. The people there are annoyed. Needless to say that Bandel-Katwa section, doubling of Bandel-Jirat (22 kms.) was primarily taken in the Railway Budget in the year 2002-03 and only Bandel-Banshberia (4 kms.) has been completed. Banshberia-Triveni (4 kms.) was targeted for completion for the year 2006-07, but it is not completed till date. The work of doubling beyond Jirat is not yet sanctioned. In the last year's Budget, the Jirat-Katwa (82 kms.) was taken for survey works, but nothing is mentioned in the Budget for the year 2008-09. The reason is not known to us. People of that area hoped that at least up to Nabadweep Dham station, all ten stations, would be sanctioned in the Budget for 2008-09. I demand that the sanction of doubling from Jirat to Nabadweep be included in the Budget for 2008-09.

Secondly, I would like to raise another case of Burdwan-Katwa (51.52 kms.) which was also taken up for gauge conversion in the last year's Budget on the basis of 50:50 share between Railway Department and the Government of West Bengal, but no progress has yet been done. Further more, the hon. Railway Minister himself announced that the works of conversion would be completed within two years in the Inaugural Function on the 30th June 2007 at the Katwa Railway premises.

The project is of Rs. 202.64 crore. Only Rs. 30 crore have been allotted in the Budget for this year. Nobody knows when it will be completed. In this context, while supporting the Budget, I demand that special measure be taken so that the project may be completed within the time as the hon. Minister announced.

With this, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI (Sarguja): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to remind hon. Minister that I had referred to some problems of my constituency in the House at the time of presentation of supplementary grants before previous general budget and discussed those problems with him personally also. Sarguja in Chhatisgarh is my constituency which has been linked by rail after 40-45 years. Hon. Minister of state Shri Naranbhai had come for inauguration but hon. Minister of Railways could not come. I would like to mention some minor issues. With lesser number of coaches it is not posible to carry all the passengers. There is a need to attach sleeper coach, AC-II and AC-III tier coaches to the train and change its schedule also. I had demanded that three new rail lines should be included in this budget after survey which would link the remote tribal areas with the whole country. Those three rail lines are Ambikapur to Jharsukhda, Ambikapur to Barmadi, and Ambikapur to Varanasi via Mayurpur. I would like to request for completion of these lines. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please sit down. Nothing is being recorded.

... *(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, after independence, the railways has expanded its network but the required development of railways cannot be achieved in a little time. When a farmer ploughs the land, he is judged by how he has ploughed at the edge. A good sari is judged by its beautiful border. The railways would not be developed in its totality until the railways reach remote and tribal areas because the railways signifies unity in diversity and is a medium to link the various cultures. Nxalites have grown in number there but the day railway expands it network to those areas, the naxalites would disappear. All these kinds of disturbances occur in areas where there is darkness, no railway network and no light of development. We hope that you would earnestly complete this work in remaining term of the government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, everything is being done in our country but the country is losing national character.

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*Not recorded.

It is good that you have promoted the sports. You have stated about tug of war. You are promoting Kabaddi, Kho-Kho in the country and it has built a new image of yours in the minds of people. I would like to request you to make efforts earnestly to expand the railway network in the country and meet the demands of my constituency.

SHRI JASUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD (Junagarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak on the discussion being held on Rail Budget and would like to make my point straight away. The entire country is thanking hon. Laluji. I am also inviting hon. Laluji to expedite the construction work of a new railway station near Somnath Mahadev Temple in my constituency and inaugurate the same. The people of my constituency are eagerly waiting to welcome him.

Sir, there is no station ahead after the place from where I come. From there, if we go towards the South pole then we will find only water. Earlier there used to be a metre gauge line in my area. This line was converted to broad gauge after persistent demands for 20-25 years. That has been made operational some one and half year back. Our problem is that all the trains that were running in the area on metre gauge have now been discontinued completely. After making it broad gauge there is only a single train running for Durg, this is the train to Jabalpur. One train for Rajkot and one for Ahmedabad are also plying. My colleague Mr. Kathuriaji had also presented a map of what he had said. Our demand is that platforms should be constructed and drinking water facility be provided on all the stations falling on the Rajkot-Veraval broad gauge line. Work of foot overbridge on the platform is still pending. For boarding the train people have to cross the tracks to reach the platform.

I would like to demand from hon. Railway Minister that all the trains for Okha are passing through Rajkot zone which is 200 km from Okha, Somnath Bairwal is also 200 kms from Rajkot and trains are running daily to Dehradun, Varanasi, Guwahati, Ernakulam, Sikandrabad, Coimbatore from Bairawal. The demands of the people of my constituency can be met if these trains are further extended upto Bairawal.

Railway Ministry had announced that it will run trains for Char Dham from Somnath Temple. It should at least introduce a single train for Rameshwaram. After the laying of broad gauge line there are two cities – Keshudh and Junagarh which fall on the way. Half of the population is living on the other side of the railway track and there is only a single under bridge in Keshudh. The people over there are demanding an under bridge for the metergauge trains and I have been continuously presenting that demand before the Railway Ministry and railway officials. Till date nothing has been decided and people have to face difficulties because the national highway and railway track are running parallel. There is only a difference of 100 or 200 meters between these two. The entire traffic gets jammed because the national highway passes through the city. There is another place called Vishadhar and construction work of bypass is going on over there. That under bridge is 18 feet deep and some work has been done there. The Ministry has sought some suggestions and had asked for depositing money, the money has also been depoite and now we would like to demand that its work should be expedited.

I would like to draw the attention of the Ministry towards an important issue. There is a huge problem of drinking water in Gujarat and Saurashtra and water pipe lines are being laid in the entire Saurashtra. Proposals are lying pending for laying of water pipe lines under 25 railway lines. A quick solution should be found in this regard. I will provide the list of to and fro trains between Rajkot and Okha to the Ministry and ask hon. Minister to complete the work of Somnath temple railway station and then come and inaugurate the same in the end of March or April. Our people want to welcome you. With these words I conclude my speech.

*I would like to draw the attention of hon. Minister towards my constituency where no single train has been introduced in the last few years and the trains that were running earlier have now been discontinued after the gauge conversion into broad gauge.

I request you to kindly take appropriate action on my following proposals:-

1. The train running from Okha via Rajkot for different places during 5 days a week are empty between Okha and Rajkot and vice versa. Certain coaches of these trains should be extended upto Somnath Veraval. These trains are:

1. 6377-Okha – Eranakulam	Saturday/ Monday
2. 5635-Okha – Guwahati	Friday

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Jasubhai Dhanabhai Barad]

3. 9569 – Okha – Varanasi Thursday

4. 9265 – Okha – Dehradun Friday

2. The trains running thrice a week from Rajkot to different states may be extended upto Somnath Veraval. These trains are:-

1. 7017–Rajkot–Sikandrabad Monday/ Wednesday

2. 6613–Rajkot–Coimbatore Sunday

3. New trains:-

1. New train to connect Somnath pilgrimage to other famous pilgrimage centres of the country.

2. New trains for connecting famous Somnath pilgrimage centre with Rameshwaram pilgrimage centre.

3. Somnath Veraval to Mumbai.

4. One more train from Somnath Veraval to Ahmedabad.

5. A local train from somnath Veraval to Rajkot.

4. The construction of Somnath railway station should be completed and inaugurated soon and all the aforesaid written proposals should also be announced.

Running these trains will help a large number of pilgrims and passengers of other areas also which will be really more important for the people.

You are requested to kindly consider the following issues also and take action in this regard.

1. Keeping in view the increased number of passengers, there is a need to increase the number of coaches in local trains running between Veraval and Rajkot.

2. 1st and 2nd AC coaches should be attached to the train running between Veraval and Ahmedabad and its old coaches should be replaced with new one.

3. There is a need to provide potable water, sitting facility for passengers, construction of foot over bridge and raising the height of platforms at all the railway stations between Rajkot and Veraval.

4. Electrification of the railway line between Rajkot and Veraval in Saurashtra region should be done.

5. After gauge conversion of Veraval-Rajkot railway line, local people are facing lot of problems. There is a need to construct an under bridge for small vehicles in Keshod city and one more under bridge in Junagarh city as there is only one under bridge in the entire Junagarh city which is insufficient in proportion to its population.

6. There is bypass road near Vishavdar across the railway line. The railway level crossing is closed when a train passes from there. It takes a lot of time to reopen and that causes heavy traffic jams there. Therefore, there is a need to construct an over bridge there also.

Immediate action should be taken on these suggestions so that the problems of daily commuters and pilgrims could be solved. All these works are important in the public interest.*

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I will mention a few points in a very short time and then lay my speech. Hon. Laluji has become an international figure. He has made a history consecutively for the third time. I think the entire House is with us and I would like to congratulate him for this. I would like to draw his attention towards the problem of my area. In his last budget speech he had given an assurance that Lucknow to Sitapur, Lakhimpur, Pilibheet, Bareilly line would be converted into broad gauge line. People respect his sentiments. They are waiting for the orders to be passed from Delhi in this regard. Please get it done. Lakhimpur is my parliamentary constituency. The train passes through its headquarters. In the absence of flyover, people face traffic jams there for hours together causing problems for them including children. Last month, the State Government sent a proposal with an estimate of approx. Rs. 9.5 crore. I would like to request him to accord sanction to the same proposal.

There is one more major issue. The trains pass through Dudhawa National Park. Many animals have died there in accidents. There is a popular demand to divert this track towards Palia to Tikunia via Majhgai Nidhasan. Thousands of online petitions from all over the country have been sent to him in this regard. He is requested to get it done. To provide access to Dudhawa National Park

from Lucknow, A DMU train should be introduced on this route. It will not only promote tourism but generate employment opportunities also for the young people. With this, I would like to lay rest of the points on the Table.

*Sir, I would like to draw attention on some of the problems of my parliamentary constituency while discussing the railway budget 2008. In his last budget speech, the hon. Railway Minister had mentioned to convert the meter gauge line of Lucknow-Malani-Bareilly division of Northern Railway into broad gauge line. The people in this entire region wholeheartedly welcome this announcement. This route can be developed as freight corridor and can become a medium for removing the regional imbalances. It can benefit the people of Bareilly, Sitapur, Lakhimpur, Pilibheet and Lucknow and can improve their economic condition which can boost industrial development in those areas. The world is taking the shape of global market with India as one of its prime locations. Since long, a need is being felt to construct express railway corridor starting from Western Europe to Far flung south eastern countries via middle east and India. This corridor on one hand can give inter-continental shape to our economy and on the other it can prove to be a milestone for the future of our young generation. Indian Railways and our leadership are fully capable to translate it into a reality. Now the time has come to work on it without any further delay. China is working on an ambitious scheme across Himalayas. Dudhawa Naitonal Park has been set up in my parliamentary constituency and 'Project Tiger' has been launched there. Many tigers, elephants and other protected animals have died in the accidents occurred here due to the train passing through it. Therefore, a popular demand is being made there to divert the railway line passing through this Sanctuary which is located on Gorakhpur division of Malani junction in North-Eastern railway towards Palia station to Tikunia via Nidhasan. It would also provide railway facility to the local people. Thousands of petitions have been sent to Government of India from all over the world through internet in this regard.

SH 26 passes through my district Kheri. It passes through other districts also on Indo-Nepal border and is the main source of transportation in those areas. There is a need to construct railway over bridges on three railway crossings falling on it so that traffic could be sped up on this Highway. These crossings are 155 A Mallia, 138-B dhardhan and 118A – Rajapur. There is another railway crossing 122A on the same railway line which is also needed to be repaired so that a bypass road for the traffic of Lakhimpur city could be constructed there.

There is a need to construct flyover particularly on railway level crossing 120 in Lakhimpur-Nagar on the same line. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has forwarded a proposal in this regard to the Ministry of Railways on 20.12.2007 with an estimate cost of Rs. 946.27 lakhs. This railway line divides the city into two parts, therefore, ROB is required to be constructed there. Palia, which is tehsil headquarater, is an important station in my district but computerized reservation system has not been started there so for. A large number of people of this area use railways to go out. This railway station is situated on Indo-Nepal border and Nepali people also use this station. Indo-Nepal Friendship Association has also made a special demand in this regard.

A demand is being made for the past many years to construct 'Yatri Nivas' at Palia, Gola Gokarannath and Lakhimpur stations. All these three cities are important for trade and tourism. Therefore, the need for 'Yatri Niwas' is being felt. In his last budget, the hon. Minister of Railways had mentioned to update the survey report for laying new railway line from Shahjahanpur to Gola Gokarannath. However, nothing has been done in this regard. He is requested to start this work.

The bridge constructed on river 'Sharda' has outlived its life and is in deteriorating condition. The floods in the river can cause heavy damage to the bridge. Therefore, special arrangements for the safety of the bridge should be made.

The loading of produce of farmers on ticket to Lucknow has been stopped at Bakeganj station as a result of which vegetable growers are facing a lot of problems. These farmers take their vegetables to Lakhimpur, Sitapur and Lucknow daily. My submission is that loading of said goods be restored at Bakeganj station.

There is a need to start a DMU from Lucknow to Dudhwa Wild Life Sanctuary, especially from tourist point of view. Level of catering should be improved. Increased traffic speed leads to economic growth. Therefore, there is a need to increase the speed of goods as well as passenger trains. There is also need to increase passenger carrying capacity of trains.*

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY (Katihar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, after a long wait my turn has come to speak on Rail Budget 2008-09. I hope you would surely appreciate my patience. I warmly welcome the hon. Minister for presenting the rail budget for the fifth year in row. I would also like to congratulate him for getting the status of management 'Guru' in the country and also abroad. I would also thank him as everybody has been praising him for ensuring all round development. All the Members started criticising him after expressing thanks. I am sad to hear criticism from the Members even by those who have won favours from him.

Sir, I represent Katihar parliamentary constituency. It is divisional headquarters of NF Railway. Recently, Shri Laluji visited Barsai for inauguration of gauge conversion work started during NDA's regime. Several leaders of his party, other public representatives and I being M.P. from there, were also present. Today, I will repeat here what I had said there. During present regime, it is for the fourth time that I am speaking on rail budget, this one being fifth budget. I am not saying anything new, I will repeat only old facts. It is said that elections are round the corner. The fear of election is reflected on every body's face. I still expect something from Shri Laluji. I would not go into details. What is the fault of Katihar? Tata Link Express connecting Bihar with Jharkhand, has been withdrawn. The people of Arariya, Kishanganj used to catch Tata Link Express from Magadh for going to Ranchi. What is our fault? I demand restoration of the said train before elections. I would say if the hon. Minister is unhappy with me, I will also be unhappy with him if he does not restore the said train. Tata Link has been withdrawn. At present, there is a train from Alipore Dwar to Ranchi. It runs via Borsoiganj station in district Katihar and not via Katihar. Then it runs non-stop upto Ranchi via Malda. If the gauge conversion, which he has inaugurated is extended upto Malda from Katihar it will help the people of this area in catching a train for Ranchi.

I have one more request - which relates to a train called Hatebazare. The people used to board this train in the night and next moving used to do shopping in Kolkata and by catching a night train they were back home. Therefore, it was known as Hatebazare. When Nitish Kumarji was the Minister of Railways, he extended it upto Barauni. After extending upto Barauni, it used to be late by 7-8 hours. He has been very kind to Saharsa. I have no complaints. But the said train runs 7-8 hours late. He did so much but withdrew two bogies from the train, though extended it upto Saharsa. Number of passengers have increased, but bogies have been reduced. I have no idea, why it has been done. I would urge him that Hatebazare. ...*(Interruptions)* Though I do not want to go into its details as it is also linked to elections, therefore, it was extended upto Barauni and now upto Saharsa. I would request the hon. Minister to start it from Katihar, then it will be alright. And add one III AC coach to it. The Minister of State is sitting here, who was quite active then. The Minister of Railways is himself noting down. If my request is cleared then Hatebazare will be a great success. I would say one more thing, Danapur-Katihar Capital Express has been extended upto Alipor Dwar beyond Jalpaiguri and upto Kamkhya thrice a week, which was earlier upto Guwahati. We accepted it, though we protested. But it is alright. If two reserved bogies and one III AC coach are attached to it, the people of Katihar, alongwith the political parties will be thankful to the hon. Minister. Now I am coming to the points. I will lay my speech. I have a lot to say, including certain old things.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is agreeing with your demands.

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: He will do only if he listens to. I have risen to speak today because people say that I speak a stylist Hindi but what I say is not listened to in Lok Sabha. Therefore, today I sat here for my turn, thinking what I speak will be telecast and people of my area will see me and listen what I am speaking. They will listen to Laluji also. That is why I am speaking. You give me some time I will conclude my speech immediately. Shri Ram Kripalji I praise you also as you, too, help us.

Sir, Mahananda Express has been extended, but its bogies have been reduced. I urge the hon. Minister to add two reserved bogies and one III AC class bogey to it. Many a trains are stopped at Barauni, whereas, the pit line is in Katihar. The hon. Minister is aware that Katihar's pit line is 100 per cent saturated and it is utilized only 30 percent. There are three pit lines here and trains got stranded at Barauni for 12 hours. I have made mention of several trains, if these are sent there, their cleanliness can be ensured and it will be convenient for passengers also.

Sir, I have one more request. Muzaffarpur-Yashwantpur train runs once a week, if it is made thrice a week it will be immensely helpful to the locals. Its reason is that large number of students from here go to Ahmedabad and Bangalore for studies and others go for

medical treatment. If it is made thrice a week it will be greatly convenient.

During Shri Paswanji's stint at the Ministry of Railways, a survey was conducted, which is in full knowledge of you. At present, there is only one railway section, *i.e.* katihar-Manihari under katihar division. Since, he has also been Chief Minister of Bihar, so he is aware of every place. If train going upto Baluaghatti is extended upto Bholka, it will provide connectivity to Bengal.

A survey was conducted for it with estimate of Rs. 156 crore. I am referring to the situation 15-20 years ago. If a new survey is conducted and the said scheme is implemented then it would greatly benefit people of Katihar and Bihar.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would conclude by talking about the Sikh community. Katihar district has two Sikh pilgrimage places. Lakshmipur and Bhandarkar. Both are important places where a large number of people from the Sikh community gather to take part in various programmes. Lakhs of People gather there. We also participate in these programmes. But it is ironical that no train stops there. We would be grateful to you if all trains are given stoppage at Kalabera station from where Lakshmipur and Bhandarkar gurudwaras can be reached. I am cutting short my speech. I would just like to say that if you resolve these problems before the elections it would be of immense benefit to you and your party, as well as to me and the general public. I thank you with all my heart.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I had also received an application for providing stoppage of trains at that station.

*SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the people of Bihar and Jharkhand have been asking for construction of a road cum rail bridge between Manihari and Sahebganj for a long time. Jharkhand would get a direct link to Bihar and North-Eastern States once this rail bridge is constructed.

1. The Express train which used to run from Katihar to Jai Nagar via Darbhanga should be restored again.

2. A halt should be constructed at Hajiyar which lies between Dalkola and Telta.

3. All passenger trains should be provided a stoppage at Bishanpur halt situated between Soneli and Jhaua.

4. 4083/84 Mahananda Express and 5610/5609 Awadh-Assam trains should be given stoppage at Telta and Sudhami respectively.

5. Radhikapur-Sealdah Express train No. 3145/3 146 should be given stoppage at Azamnagar Road station.

6. An over bridge should be constructed at Goshala rail gate and Santoshi chowk rail gate in Katihar.

7. The departure time of new DMU trains from Patna and Katihar should be 6.00 in the morning in public interest. As much as 111 acre railway land is lying vacant in Katihar. There is a proposal to construct residential buildings for railway employees on the said land whereas a large number of such buildings are already available in Katihar. I request the railway Minister that construction of either a repair and maintenance workshop of diesel rail engines or a railway sleeper coach-manufacturing factory on this land would be more appropriate. With these words, I conclude my speech.*

[English]

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (Sabarkantha): Sir, first of all, I congratulate Shri Lalu Prasad for putting up such an excellent Budget which takes care of almost every section of the society.

Having said that. I come to the point. Last year while replying to the debate on Railway Budget, he said that he had approved the missing link of 16 kilometres between Modasa and Shamlaji which falls in West Ahmedabad Division of the Western Railway in Sabarkantha. I am sorry to say, but the work of this missing link has not yet started. There is hardly any allocation in the Budget for this work.

Secondly, I congratulate Shri Lalu Prasad for approving a project between Ahmedabad, Himatnagar and Udaipur. The cost of the entire section to the Railways would be Rs. 784 crore for converting the metre gauge railway line into broad gauge railway line. I also request him that the work of this section should also start immediately.

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Madhusudan Mistry]

We demand that a survey be done in Ahmedabad Division of Western Railway from Khedbrahma to Ambaji to Abu Road, which will connect the entire region with Delhi.

Palanpur is now connected with Kandla Port. Its hinterland spreads right up to Madhya Pradesh. My suggestion to the Ministry is that from Palanpur, a new line can be laid to a place called Vadali in Sabarkantha, which will go to Himatnagar and from there, it will go to Udaipur. Udaipur-Ratlam section is already approved now. The entire Madhya Pradesh can be connected to the whole new freight corridor, which is in fact starting in a few years. It will cater to the needs of the entire Central India. So, this needs to be looked into.

Then, Modasa can be connected with a new railway line to Lunawada and Godhra, which is a stretch which has been missing. I am very happy that this Railway Budget in a way has changed the image of the Railway Ministry. Not only that, it has been so beneficial to the poorest section of the society. I offer my hearty congratulations to all the people who are working for the Railways and especially to Shri Lalu Prasad.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The next speaker is Dr. Sujan Chakraborty. I can allow you to speak only for three or four minutes.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY (Jadavpur): Sir, I will not take more than five minutes as I can understand the position.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the Railway Minister for presenting a very good Budget. He has turned the Railways into a profitable organization. Thanks to him for doing this.

I would like to speak in my mother language.

[Translation]

*Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate the Railway Minister for basically a very good Budget and he has turned the Railways into a profitable organization. Hence for that. I would like to speak in my mother tongue, Sir.

My fellow members have raised various issues and I don't want to repeat those. I have only five points to mention. In the Eastern Railway, one major problem is that of the hawkers. There is a historical background and I am not going in to that. 41 Members from West Bengal have met Hon'ble Minister and have asked him to provide licence to the hawkers. He committed he will look into this matter soon. In this context I would like to say that along with the developmental project undertaken by Railways, the very important issue of rehabilitation should also be taken up by the ministry. There is no other option here. Secondly, Metro Rail is the very significant mode of transport in Kolkata, we all know that. The extension work of Metro up to Garia is to be completed by 2008. This is March, 2008. 9 more months are left. It has already been delayed. So, special attention has to be paid to the completion of the pending work. Under the material modification work, there is a proposal to construct a sub-urban terminal at New Garia. The other proposal is to extend it to Dakshineshwar. Since the city is expanded I want the Metro to extend to as well as Baruipur.

Thirdly, we are discussing about new railway lines. A proposal has come from the Eastern Railways for Baruipur-New Garia-Shaldah third Lines. It has reached the department. Mr. Minister while replying may kindly mention this. I also asked for the construction of much awaited Piali-Sonakhali-Dhamakhali line within Sundarban proposed by Eastern Railways. With special emphasis on Sundarban area, Joynagar-Jamtala-Joynagar-Raidighi line should also be constructed.

Fourthly, Sealdah and Howrah stations are extremely important undoubtedly. Mumbai is also significant; frequency of trains there is very high. So, why can't we develop Sealdah and Howrah just like Mumbai. The problem areas should be identified, the bottlenecks should be removed because the commuters are facing various problems. Accidents are rampant; in fact the statistics of accidents are available and we can understand the gravity of the problems. Thus the facilities for the sub-urban commuters should be developed. Along with that 12 boggi trains need to be introduced immediately. Six racks are yet to be provided to Sealdah and Howrah as committed by the Minister. New coaches and racks are the need of the hour.

Sir, in the Sealdah division, South section of Eastern Railway, Champahati local, Jaynagar local and Mograhat local are required. They should be introduced as soon as possible.

Lastly, railway over bridge is extremely important but due to the fifty-fifty sharing, the burden falls mostly on

*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Bengali

the State Governments as a result of which safety is being compromised. Hon'ble Minister is aware of this. Thus, the ratio should be 25 is to 75 to reduce the burden of the States. There is no other alternative and this should be given due importance.

For sharing the cost of ROB, there is no other alternative to 25:75 ratio, and this must be taken note of and given due importance.

Kolkata is spreading its wings and along with its expansion Baruipur and Barasat are developing as two metro cities gradually. Previous ministers have also discussed this. So Braulpur-Barasat link is very much essential. I would like to congratulate the Ministry for the type of work it has undertaken and the splendid work they are doing. But probably the issue of out sourcing should be carefully looked in to; whether this out sourcing will negatively affect the performance of the Indian Railways which all of us boast of.

*SHRI ANANTHA VENKATARAMI REDDY (Anantapur): Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the General Discussion on the Railway Budget for the year 2008-2009. I am happy that the Hon'ble Minister Shri Lalu Prasad and his Minister of State Shri Velu have been able to successively present fifth successive Budget without any increase in the fares and at the same time attaining record profits for the Railways. I congratulate both the Ministers for this record achievement. In this year the net profit has been shown as Rs. 25,000 crore. The Minister Shri Lalu Prasad has done a remarkable thing by reducing the fares to the common man and also in AC class journeys.

At the national level, the Minister of Railways has taken a progressive step in introducing many new features in the Railways like E-ticketing, green toilets and betterment of railway station premises etc. He brought in cheer among lakhs of Railway coolies by regularizing their services as Gangmen.

Coming to Guntakal division in South Central Railway, a large part of my constituency falls in this Division. This is the largest revenue earning division in this Zone and lakhs of tonnes of iron ore and other material are transported to Chennai port from this division thus fetching record revenues to the division. In his last Budget Shri Lalu Prasad has sanctioned a new line between Rayadurg and Tumkur for which the total amount is required is Rs. 880 crore. In this year's Budget he has allocated a sum of Rs. 15 crore only. I request him to increase the allocation for this important new line connecting two States.

About the gauge conversion works between Kallur and Guntakal, the request him to see that the gauge conversion is completed at the earliest as it would benefit thousands of passengers who travel everyday. The Minister has also decided to give Nandalur - Guntakal work to Rail Vikas Nigam Limited.

One very important line in the Rayalaseema region is the Yerraguntla-Nandyal line for which Rs. 36 crore is allotted in this Budget. There is a need to allocate more funds for this line so that the work is completed on an expeditious basis. For Pakala-Dharmavaram gauge conversion work an amount of Rs. 76 crore is allocated and I am hopeful that the work would be completed this year. For Renigunta-Guntakal doubling work, which is pending for more than three decades, an amount of Rs. 86 crore is allotted in this year which is very much short. I request the Minister to increase the allocation for this work.

Sir, Anantapur district is one of the backward districts in Andhra Pradesh and it needs to be given every encouragement by the Ministry of Railways for its development. For more than ten years no new projects were announced by the Railways and it is only under the regime of Shri Lalu Prasad and Shri Veluji that some of these projects are announced. There is a need to increase the financial allocation in this year so that the works could be completed before next March.

As I mentioned, lakhs of tonnes of iron ore is transported from Guntakal division to Chennai port. Because of this heavy movement of goods vehicles, the track is getting congested and the passenger trains are running slowly. There is a need to have doubling of the line in order to facilitate smooth movement of traffic.

The existing meter gauge line between Anantapur and Dharmavaram is to be converted into broad gauge. At present it is being done only up to Kallur. The work should be taken up for doing gauge conversion up to Dharmavaram.

I now submit my request for introduction of some new trains. Two very important religious places—Tirupati and Shirdi—should be connected by a direct train which

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Anantha Venkatarami Reddy]

would serve the needs of thousands of passengers in my district also. I request the Minister to run a day train between Hyderabad and Tirupati via Dhone and Tadipatri to facilitate people in my constituency to go to Hyderabad and Tirupati during day time.

At present a daily train is running between Secunderabad and Kurnool. The halting time at Kurnool is more than two hours which is an idle time. I have been requesting for extending this train up to Guntakal so that the Zonal headquarters and Divisional headquarters are connected by a daily train which would facilitate thousands of daily commuters.

Sir, I have brought out only a few points concerning the needs of the people of my constituency. I urge upon the Hon'ble Minister Shri Lalu Prasad and also the Minister of State Shri Veluji to kindly give special attention to my requests and sanction the projects and increase the financial allocations as mentioned.

I once again take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister Shri lalu Prasad and conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD (Yavatmal): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

First, I would like to thank the Railway Ministry, the Railway Minister and his colleagues. He has made an announcement for laying a new rail line from Nanded to Wardha via Yavatmal. I also thank the Maharashtra government for deciding to contribute the state share of Rs. 290 crore. I would like to thank Shri Vilasrao Deshmukhji too. I, through you would like to inform the House that a meter gauge line, called Shakuntala, runs along the Yavatmal-Murtazapur section which was laid during the British rule. I have been reiterating my demand for carrying out gauge conversion of this line from time to time. But the fact is that instead of carrying out gauge conversion of the line even the existing tracks are being dismantled and sold off. I would request the Railway Ministry to look into the matter. I had a meeting with the Chief Minister of Maharashtra and I was informed that only 4 percent rail lines have been laid in Maharashtra after independence. This is great injustice towards Maharashtra. An agitation is going on for improvement in rail services in the Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli-Baijnath section. We had hoped that the Railway Minister would take care of our demands in the current rail budget but nothing has been done so far.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, now I would like to draw your attention towards suburban Mumbai. The rail network is the lifeline of Mumbai. Mumbai would come to a standstill, if the train service in the city fails. This very rail network is in a dismal state. Mumbai is a commercial city and 33 percent of its revenue earnings go into the coffers of the Union Government. The government should take care of it.

There is an underbridge in Dhamangaon but it has not been commissioned due to technical reasons. Thousands of people face difficulties because this bridge has not been opened for commuters as yet. The congestion at this crossing becomes unmanageable. The opening of this bridge is being delayed only due to technical reasons. I would request the Minister to look into the matter.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Prerna Express runs from Nagpur to Ahmedabad. It should be either extended upto Abu Road or it should originate from Bikaner. Prajapati Brahma Kumari Ishwariya Mahavidhyalaya is situated at Abu Road which is visited by lakhs of people. People get waitlisted tickets for this place even two months in advance, I have repeatedly submitted representations in this regard but no reply is forth coming, Hence I, through you, would like to place the people's demand before the House.

I had thought that a railway line would be laid for Nanded Gurudwara by the year 2009. Half of the work has been completed. A 75 km. long old rail track already existed there. Land was available and bridges were also present.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: How long will you speak, it is 11 O'clock now.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: I am speaking at this late hour only to thank you. There is no other reason.

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Then simply say thanks and lay your speech.

SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD: Thank you.

[English]

SHRI FRANCISCO COSME SARDINHA (Mormugao): Sir, I rise to support the Rail Budget presented by Railway Minister. I must congratulate the Railway Minister and the UPA Government for giving an *aam aadmi* Railway Budget to the country.

Lots of sops have been given to the poor, rich, senior citizens and girl students. In fact every section of the society has benefited by this Budget. However, attention has not been paid to the unfortunate people who are ailing with terminal illnesses. I would like to bring a few things to the notice of the Railway Minister in this connection. We have the Tata Hospital in Mumbai. People from various States come to that hospital for cancer treatment. People also come for treatment of other illnesses and operations because there are so many good hospitals in Mumbai. The UPA Government has given many perks and benevolence to everybody. Before these people exchange the world, I want them also to benefit. So, my request to the hon. Railway Minister is that 100 per cent free traveling facility be given to these patients. They are accompanied by another person. Those accompanying persons should be given 50 per cent concession in the fare.

I must thank the Railway Minister for starting a new train from Vasco to Patna and also for increasing the frequency of Rajdhani. Goa is one of the important tourist destinations in the country and in the world. Many tourists come from all over the world to Goa from where they travel to Kerala, Chennai and other places. In every State there is a train starting from the capital. So, I would request the Railway Minister to start a train from Vasco to Kanyakumari. My colleagues from Kerala were also requesting for the same.

We have got Rajdhani but it makes only one halt in Goa, in Madgaon. So, people from North prefer to go to Maharashtra to catch the train. I would request the hon. Minister to allow that to make another stop near Panaji at Karmali station. Otherwise, people have to go all the way to Sawantwadi to catch the train.

These are some more demands which have been brought time and again to the notice of the Ministry.

1. Starting a daily passenger train from Vasco to Miraj and *vice versa* since there is not even one passenger train running between Vasco-da-Gama and Londa.

2. Connection to Tirupati (Haripriya Express) may be provided at Londa junction or provide an alternative new train from Vasco to Tirupati, Secunderabad and Hyderabad. This was assured by hon. Minister of State for Railways Shri Narayanbhai Rathwa during his visit to Goa at Margaon Press Conference. I hope he has not forgotten that.

3. Train No.7310/7309 Vasco-da-Gama to Yeshwantpur biweekly express be extended to Bangalore City with daily service and that be renamed as Siddharoodh Express.

4. Train No.6201/6202 Mysore-Dharwad Express be extended to Vasco-da-Gama at least thrice in a week since the train remains idle at Dharwad station from 0600 hours to 1940 hours everyday.

23.00 hrs.

From Vasco, Train No.2847 and 2848 Vasco-Howrah and Vasco-Amravati Express are running four days a week. My request is that it may be converted into a daily service. I am the only MP from Goa, please let me speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may conclude and the rest of the speech may be laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI FRANCISCO COSME SARDINHA: One more last point, Sir. Many youth and farmers were displaced because of Konkan Railways but still they have not been employed. My request to the hon. Minister is that their children should be recruited as early as possible. I would like to once again congratulate the Railway Minister and his team for improving the railway situation in the country.

ADV. SURESH KURUP (Kottayam): Sir, initially, I would like to congratulate the Railway Minister on behalf of the people of Kerala for allocating sufficient provisions for one of the longstanding demands of the people of Kerala for the Railway Coach Factory in Palakad in Kerala. So, this is the first time I would say in my short experience in Parliament that Members and people of Kerala were more or less satisfied regarding the Railway Budget. I would also congratulate the Railway Minister for providing new trains to Kerala, which are highly essential.

I would like to say about the doubling of the railway line from Ernakulam to Kayamkulam *via* Kottayam and Alleppey. This is the most important railway line which Kerala owns for the economic development of Kerala.

23.02 hrs.

[SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN *in the Chair*]

In that Ernakulam *via* Kottayam line, enough provisions are available in the Budget for completion of the whole line but the work is moving in a very slow pace. Initial provision from Ernakulam to Mulanthirutti was provided in the Budget some six years ago when Shri Nitish Kumar was the Railway Minister. Even now the work is going on. It would have been completed within a short span of one or two years but even now this work is going at a slow pace. Hence, I would like to state that for doubling of these two lines, sufficient provisions are not there for completing the projects. These two railway lines should be completed on a time-frame programme. I have requested the Railway Minister again and again that there should be a time-frame and within that time-frame this doubling project should be completed. Land has already been acquired but the work is moving in a fast pace.

Another long-standing demand of the people of Kerala is creation of a Railway Zone. I am sure that other Members have spoken about it. Like we have been demanding for the Railway Wagon Factory in Kerala, we have been demanding for this Railway Zone for quite some time but unfortunately the Ministry has not taken this into consideration. It is always stated that the Planning Commission would not agree for this.

But when other divisions are allowed in other parts of India, there should be no such obstacle here. Only when Kerala demands for a Railway Zone, which is highly essential for Kerala, they say all these things; it is because most of the funds which are provided for the Southern Railway, is being diverted to other parts, but not to Kerala. The funds which should have come to Kerala for other works, are easily diverted to other parts of the Southern Railway Division. So, if only a separate Zone is given to Kerala, funds will be properly provided to Kerala and funds will be properly utilized for Kerala. That is the most important thing. We underline that the most important need of Kerala is a separate Zone.

Another thing is that certain trains now already start from Alleppey. If the Railway Ministry considers this proposal, one or two trains can very well start from Kottayam, which is my constituency. It is only the next major station from Ernakulam and there are so many passengers going to various parts of India from Kottayam. So, some trains that start from Ernakulam now, can very start from Kottayam.

Another thing is this. I have personally met Shri Velu and asked for certain stoppages of some trains at Chenganacherry, Ettamanur and Peravan Road Railway Stations, which are very important stations. In Peravan Road, Hindustan Newsprint Factory is there and also another cement factory is there. Only one or two trains stop in that station. So, railway stops for 2-3 trains which I have mentioned in the memorandum which I gave to Shri Velu, which is very well with him, should be given. This is what I wanted to say.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK ARGAL (Morena): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Railway Minister has presented the rail budget for 2008-09 in the House. He has not put any additional burden on the public and has rather reduced fares. The entire country has lauded this budget. But this budget has nothing to offer to the Gwalior division. I had put a demand before the Railway Minister during the previous budget speech that the Gwalior-Sheopurkalan-Kota rail line should be extended. The rail line going to Sheopur is 100 years old. It is a heritage line. Gauge conversion of that rail line is very important. I feel that the hon. Railway Minister should come to the House.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon. Railway Minister has recently provided stoppage of Shatabdi Express at Morena railway station which falls in my constituency. For this, I express the heartfelt thanks on behalf of the people of Morena and Chambal divisions. The work on Guna-Etawah rail line has not been completed. It needs to be completed expeditiously. Similarly, Dhaulpura to Sarmathura is an old rail route. Gauge conversion on this line needs to be carried-out. Dhaulpur railway station, adjacent to my constituency, is the only railway station of Rajasthan. I want stoppage of Shatabdi Express there.

Sir, whenever we travel by trains, we find the toilets in a poor state. I have seen it in several trains. It needs a lot of improvement. There is problem with bedrolls also. Sometimes, it has been seen that wet bedrolls are supplied. It also needs to be improved. Mark-3 rifles are given to some jawans of RPF. If any hoodlum snatches something and runs away then the jawans can not run with these rifles as these are heavy. I had been on a tour of Europe. I did not see any railway security guard armed with rifle, SLR or Mark-3 there. I saw such arms

nowhere. I want that modern weapons should be provided to RPF which should be convenient for them and help them in nabbing the criminals.

Mr. Chairman Sir, I demand that the railway should issue pass to MISA detainees because several states like Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh have accorded them the status of freedom fighters.

Sir, the persons working in pantry-cars do not enjoy the status of workers. If any of them meets with an accident, the contractor leaves him in the lurch. I would like them to be insured for a sum of five lakh rupees by the contractor. It would help them.

Sir, Mahakaushal and Utkal Express Should have stoppage at Banmon Railway station in my constituency.

Sir, it is my humble suggestion that sale of paan (betal), Gutkha and beedi should be banned within a radius of 200 to 250 metres from the railway stations. It would help in keeping the stations neat and clean.

Sir, the railway quarters for the railway staff, which are situated near railway stations, are very old. I would like these old quarters to be demolished and new houses should be constructed for employees who work hard day and night.

Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I lay the rest of my demands on the Table.

*Sir, I welcome as well as oppose the rail budget 2008-09. I welcome the budget because you have not imposed any burden on the public during your tenure but I had earlier stated in this House that I would walk on foot from Muraina to Patna to welcome you if Gwalior-Shyopur Kala rail line is taken up for gauge-conversion. But I have not come across this in this budget whereas this rail line is 100 years old heritage line. The people of my parliamentary constituency have been disappointed. The public is holding an agitation for this demand on 17.3.2008 at Vahelaras.

Sir, the gauge conversion of this important rail line is essential. Guna-Etawah rail line was supposed to reach Etawah but at present the train goes up to Bhind only on this line. This line has not been expended at all during the last four years and I would like to expansion work to be completed immediately. Dhaulpur-Sirmathura narrow gauge line of North-Central railway needs to be converted. I thank you on behalf of the public of Morena Chambal valley for providing stoppage of Shatabdi Express at Morena and demand the stoppage of Bangalore Rajadhani and Bilaspur Rajdhani at Gwalior station. There is a need to provide stoppage of weekly train Navyug Express and Hirakund Express at Morena railway station. Shatabdi Express should have stoppage at Dhaulpur railway station which is an important railway station in Rajasthan state. Only shuttle passenger train and Chhattisgarh Express stop at Banmore railway station. There is a need for stoppage of Mahakaushal and Utkal Express there.

It has been seen often that the toilets of trains are in a very poor state. Attention should be paid to cleaning of toilets at all the major railway stations. Cleanliness is necessary. The waste material is thrown from the trains at railway tracks and groups of animals gather on the tracks. An old weapon 303 is provided to RPF for security which is not suitable for train or station duty. I did not see any security personnel carrying a heavy weapon like rifle in Europe. The security personnel should be provided small modern weapons which would relieve them of extra weight and help them in running and nabbing the hoodlums easily. I would like to suggest that the Gutkha, betel and tobacco shops within a distance of 100 metres from the stations should be banned. The bedrolls supplied in various trains are not good and are even wet. Many stations do not have stoppage of trains. The stoppage of trains needs to be provided at those stations. The old railway quarters situated near the station and meant for the railway staff need to be demolished and new houses should be constructed for them.*

[English]

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to participate in the consideration of the Union Railway Budget, 2008-09 presented by the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasadji.

At the very outset, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister and his team for having presented such a people friendly rather passenger-friendly budget for the fifth time under the UFA Government.

While congratulating the Minister, I would like to come down directly to the Annual Plan 2008-09. Here we have seen an increased investment of about 21 per cent and it really reflects the good managerial quality of the hon.

*... *This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. Thokchom Meinya]

Railway Minister. Now I would like to come to the seven national projects ranging from Jammu and Kashmir to other parts of the country and four to five projects belong to North-Eastern India. It is very interesting to note that I come from a State which has never seen a train in the last 60 years after the State of Manipur got merged into the Union of India. The first railhead was laid at Jirighat and this would be constructed under the name of Jiribam-Imphal (Tupul) Rail Line. This is targeted to be completed by 2010. I strongly urge upon the Government and particularly the Ministry of Railways to see that this particular national project is completed in time. This project will take the train from Jiribam to Imphal then to Myanmar and to South East Asia. This will be a great step for the people of Manipur because when the railhead was laid at Jiribam, the people of Manipur were very happy. They thought that after this train passes through this State, their economic activities which are very slow for many reasons like bad communication and less infrastructure development in that area will speed up. People are looking forward towards development of their own activities. One interesting thing is that almost all the people there are now yearning for very fast development. As you know, this particular State has a lot of problems and the economic development is the key for all the solutions. Therefore, this has become very essential part of it. I have taken such a long time to see that this particular rail project is completed by 2009 because election is in 2009.

But the targeted priority is 2010. I wish that we should be able to see some of the works completed by then. With these few words I would like to thank the Railway Ministry, particularly the hon. Ministers for the kind gesture that they have shown to the State and also for presenting a very people-friendly, rather a passenger-friendly Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKHLAL MAJHI (Akbarpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for presenting this 25,000 crore rupees profit budget without increasing the passenger fare and freight rates and especially prepared for the poor, backward and rural people.

We also appreciate the dream projects and ideas of hon. Laluji. We thank hon. Minister of Railways for providing free passes to the students. We thank the hon. Minister of Railways and his colleague the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways for providing 50 percent concession to AIDS patients, concession to senior citizens and ladies, taking decision to acquire sick rail coach factories in order to save thousands of workers from being unemployed and promote employment, increasing me number of Garib Raths and converting all the express trains into superfast trains.

I have been listening a lot of things since 2 O'clock. I just want to raise some of the problems of my constituency. Hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways, Sir, there is no facility for the people of Gautam Buddha's land Kabir Nagar and the great exponent of Socialism Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia's land Ambedkar Nagar to visit Allahabad which is a very sacred city of India. They have to take a detour of 600-700 kms. via Bhatni, Gorakhpur, Varanasi or Lucknow to visit the hon. High Court or the Sangam. They have no facilities for going towards South India either. The people of the land of the Gautam Buddha, Sufi Saint Kabir and Lohia have not done any crime. Trains have been running from Ambedkar Nagar to Tanda since the British times. If the Khalilabad line can be extended by 40 kms. via Dhanghata and only one bridge is constructed on the Ghaghra river, then Tanda can be connected. If Tanda is connected directly to Akbarpur and then to Sultanpur ...*(Interruptions)* Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been waiting since 2 O'clock, therefore, I should also be given five minutes. I am not the one who speaks every time. I speak rarely, therefore, I should be given extra time.

Hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways, Sir, if this line is connected then the people taking a detour of 500 kms or 700 kms. will be able to reach the hon. High Court, Allahabad and Sangam by covering just 200 kms and they can also take South India bound trains from there.

Tanda is a city of weavers producing the cheapest handloom cloth in the country. It not only provides livelihood to lakhs of weavers but is also visited by the traders, artisans and officers from all over the country. There are NTPC, sugar mill, JP Cement plant and a large trading center here. Lakhs of people go there and people of 4-5 districts will get the travel facility besides an increase in the income of the Railways if it is connected with a direct route.

Sir, I want to say one more thing that NER has its headquarters in Gorakhpur.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please help me in concluding the proceedings.

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKH LAL MAJHI: I will conclude soon. I only need two minutes more. The traffic on the Gorakhpur to Chhapra via Lucknow line has increased by 150-200 percent within a decade. But, it is a single line track and it takes 6-7 hours to complete the 200-250 kms. journey from Lucknow to Gorakhpur. You had introduced intercity train which used to take 4-5 hours but now it takes 6 hours. This route has not been electrified and the slow pace at which the work of doubling the line is going on, I think that even in next ten years it will not be possible to link Lucknow with Gorakhpur. I demand that the doubling work should be completed soon in a time bound manner.

Hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways, I had visited your office once. I had told you that the Ambedkar Nagar, which is the district headquarters ...*(Interruptions)* There is no pavement on the over bridge there. You had closed the crossing 83-A below it, which is just beside the railway station, when the over bridge was thrown open. Thousands, of children used to go from there and four persons have been crushed to death within four months. I demand again today that if you want that more persons from my district do not die, then the crossing 83-A under the over bridge near Akbarpur railway station should be opened again.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please stop here. Nothing will go on record if you speak further.

... *(Interruptions)***

[Translation]

*SHRI SHANKH LAL MAJHI: Sir, I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for presenting the fifth consecutive railway budget with surplus of Rs. 25,000 crore without increasing the passenger fares and freight rates and also appreciate his dream project and his vision. Besides, I also thank him for:-

1. providing travel facilities to the students in the budget.
2. giving 50% concession in fares to the AIDS patients.
3. giving concession to the senior citizens and women.
4. saving thousands of labourers from becoming unemployed by acquiring sick coach factories with the aim of promoting employment.
5. increasing the number of Garib Rath trains.
6. introducing 53 new trains.
7. converting several express trains into superfast trains.
8. according the status of railway employees to porters.

Sir, railway is the lifeline of the country and for life it is necessary that each organ keeps working. There should be uniform, sufficient representation and development in all the parts of the country. The manner in which the former headquarters of NER, Gorakhpur (GKP) was neglected and transferred, it puts a question mark on the clear thinking of the hon. Minister.

Sir, traffic on the Lucknow-Gorakhpur main route has increased by 150-200% in the last decade but the doubling work on this track has not been completed so far. It has been completed upto Manikapur only which creates unnecessary delay. I demand that electrification and doubling work of the Lucknow-Gorakhpur line should be completed in a time bound manner in the next two years at any cost.

Sir, I demand that the Faizabad-Mumbai train should be extended to Akbarpur to link Mumbai and Delhi directly and train services should be provided upto Tanda.

Sir, there is no direct route from NER headquarters, *Gorakhpur to South India. I urge the hon. Minister of Railways to connect Gorakhpur with world famous Sufi Saint Kabirmath Maghar, Dhanghata, Tanda Mahirpur, Akbarpur, Sultanpur, Allahabad, Banglore and then Chennai. For this purpose, a new rail line between Maghar and Khalilabad, a section of 40 km will have to be laid and a bridge on river Ghaghra would be required to be constructed connecting Tanda and Akbarpur directly, with district Sultanpur at a distance of 40 kms. it will connect Gorakhpur, Akbarpur (Ambedkarnagar) Sultanpur, Pratapgarh, Allahabad directly. It will provide direct route

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**Not recorded.

*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Shankh Lal Majhi]

from Allahabad High Court to Poorvanchal and also to South India – facilitating lakhs of south bound passengers. It will also earn revenue of lakhs and crores of rupees for railways.

Sir, for namesake there is one train Kaifiyat Express from my Parliamentary Constituency – also a district headquarters to Delhi. But the bogies provided in this train are worse than those of passenger trains. I had requested the hon. Minister to upgrade Kaifiyat Express to Super fast train, attach good coaches and pantry car to it and also for ensuring its running as per scheduled timings as it generally runs late by 3-5 hours daily and also to start it from New Delhi instead of Delhi Jn. Today, again I repeat my demand that this only train on the said route should be started from New Delhi and passenger amenities be improved in the Kaifiyat Express.

Sir, Azamgarh, Faizabad, Bahroch state highway was inaugurated last November at Ambedkarnagar district headquarters. The railway level crossing number 83A was closed on the day of the inauguration. The traffic *i.e.* buses, truckes etc. on the said overbridge remain congested. During last 3-4 months 3-4 people died in accident on the said overbridge. I had met the hon. Minister personally and requested him for opening closed level crossing number 83A again. The hon. Minister gave assurance also but the level crossing has not yet been opened. It has led to resentment amongst the locals. People are in agitating mood. Sir, through you, I request the hon. Minister to open the said level crossing.

Sir, there is no AC retiring room at the station and there are only two booking counters resulting in long queues for reservation. Therefore, I urge for opening two extra booking counters. I also demand for taxi stand at Akbarpur railway station and there is enough space for booking of goods and storage but hardly a place for parking of vehicles. There is acute; shprtage of staff at the station. My submission is that staff should be recruited as per the sanctioned strength so that people do not have to wart in long queues. I am grateful to you for having permitted me to speak, With this I conclude.*

SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR (Vadodara): I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways as my last year's demand regarding construction of rail overbridges in my parliamentary constituency, the work for construction of an ROB at Makarpura GIDC railway crossing, second at Navayai, third at Demeshbhil. ...*(Interruptions)* and fouth at Lalbagh has already started. These ROBs fall in mine as well Shri Narayan Bhai Rathwa constituencies. I am grateful to him as he accepted my demand and construction work has already started. I had also demanded for a rail line between Ahmedabad and Patna. The people of Bihar Sanskritik Mandal has made a demand in this regard. As many as 30-40 thousand people of Bihar who are walking here have also made this demand. I am thankful to him for having accepted my demand. I also demand for a new rail line between Baroda and Haridwar.

Sir, I would also like to draw his attention to an unfinished job. Bhumipujan of station building in western side of Alkapuri was done some eight months ago. The work of the said building should be completed at the earliest.

I would also like to draw his attention to another issue. I would like to draw his attention to the important demands of the Govt. of Gujarat farwarded to the Ministry of Railways. First, for crossing the railway level crossings the clearnance or approval of competent officer has to be obtained under Jath Pani Purvatha Yojna in villages for different projects. It takes time and consequently it leads to escalation of cost and ultimately people are deprived of important facilities. At present, certain similar projects are getting delayed in Jamnagar, Kutchch Panchmahal, Navsari, Rajkot, Khara and Surat districts. ... *(Interruptions).* My submission is that such pending projects should be cleared and completed expeditiously. ...*(Interruptions)*

There is a railway level crossing near Pilol under my Parliamentary constituency. The said level crossing remains closed after noon and the evening, consequently the people have to travel an extra 15 kms. The local people have given a memorandum to the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways, Shri Narayanbhai Rathwa in this regard. The work on this crossing should be completed out of this budget allocation itself. Sayajinogai, starting from Baroda, has been extended upto Kutchch. I have no objection to it, but three coaches should be added to it from Baroda so that youth going from Baroda for daily chores can travel conveniently.

Ladies compartment in Lokshakti Express is very small. A large number of ladies travel by the said train. There is a need to provide a good coach in place of the present one.

Bhajans and old film songs used to be played on trains earlier but since the last three or four years this practice has been stopped. Now-a-days only recordings of musical instruments is played which sounds monotonous. I would like the earlier trend to be reverted to. I have discussed this issue. If this demand is fulfilled, it would be a welcome step.

I would like to make some suggestions. Gujarat has many GIDCs such as Baroda, Ranauli, Makarpura, Nanadseri etc. Similarly, a lot of people travel to Ahmedabad and Vapi for work. The frequency of DMU and EMU trains to these places should be increased. Benches, drinking water facilities, pictograms, foot overbridges, booking windows etc should be augmented at the small stations in my constituency.

A survey should be conducted of all the trains which are running without pantry car. This facility should be provided in more trains. Scrap material is strewn about on roadside tracks in seven divisions of Western Railway. If this scrap is auctioned or disposed of through local bidding it would earn crores of rupees as revenue for the railways which can be used to improve public facilities. ...*(Interruptions)*.

A washing line should be built in Gujarat on lines of the line constructed by Konkan railways for washing a train with upto 22 coaches in merely 20 minutes which cost Rs. fifty lakh. Such a washing line should be constructed in Baroda, Palampur, Mahua and Veraval in Gujarat.

I thank you for giving me time to speak. With this I conclude.

DR. ARVIND SHARMA (Karnal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. All the parties whether they belong to the ruling alliance or to the opposition. ...*(Interruptions)* have supported the railway budget and appreciated it. I would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister on this occasion. Every one has highly commended this budget. I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister on behalf of my colleagues as well.

Mr. Chairman, Sir Commonwealth Games 2010 are round the corner. In view of the forthcoming Games, I would like to request the hon. Minister to provide more facilities at all the railway stations that lie within a radius of 200 km from Delhi. These stations should be made model stations and Express, intercity and passenger trains should be run from these stations. All facilities available in a top grade station should be made available at these stations. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards a demand which I have been raising for the last four years. Last year the hon. Minister had given me an assurance that he would fulfill my demands. Shan-e-Punjab train has been passing through my constituency Karnal for the last 22 years. A large number of our Sikh brethern reside in Karnal. This train would attract a large number of passengers at this station who want to visit Golden Temple in Amritsar and go to 'Radha Sawmi Satsang'. I would like to request the hon. Minister to provide for merely half-a-minute of stoppage of this train at Karnal. My second request is regarding the Himalayan Queen train. ...*(Interruptions)*. Passengers want that train to have a stoppage at Samalakha . ...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Chairman, Sir, kindly let me speak for a minute. My demand is that Himalayan Queen Express should be given stoppage at Samalakha. Secondly, G.M. Express used to stop at Gawanda. But for the last six months this halt has been discontinued. This was a very important train. It had a stoppage at this station for the last 20 years. I would request the hon. Minister to restore the stoppage of Jhelum Express at the station. Stoppage should be given to Himalayan Queen at Samalakha and Shan-e-Punjab at Karnal.

After one last point, I will lay my speech. I would request the hon. Minister that a Jammu-Amritsar-Delhi Garib Rath should be started. The facilities provided for sports persons by the Railway Minister are commendable. I would like to congratulate him for that. They shold be given all possible facilities. I have another small demand that a new reservation counter should be opened in Karnal. This reservation counter should cater to the handicapped senior citizens and women.

[English]

*I have had some suggestions to you regarding the long pending genuine demands and problems faced by the rail users and general public of my Karnal Lok Sabha Constituency during the budget sessions and the Zonal Meetings by the Railways officials from 2004 to till and thanks for your endeavour to examine the positions of the issues raised by me and action taken by you accordingly.

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*...*This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. Arvind Sharma]

I am again drawing your kind attention regarding the same pending major demands and problems of the daily commuters and general public of Karnal Constituency which are not resolve till now by the Railways. These are the following suggestions:-

1. **Stoppage of Himalayan Queen at Samalkha Railway Station Distt. Panipat (Haryana):** According to the remarks given by the Railways authority for stoppage of this train is about to nil due to the decelerating speed but there is very heavy demand of the daily comrriuters/ public of Tehsil Samalkha which cover 60 villages of the area for the stoppage of this train as they are earning their livelihoods from different places like, Panipat, Karnal, Kurukshetra, Ambala and Chandigarh as these are industrial and business cities and I am giving surety to you that the Railways will get definitely maximum revenue after stopping of the train.

2. **Stoppage of Shan-e-Punjab at Karnal Railway Station Up and Down:** It comes to my notice that this train always stopped unnecessarily near the Trawari Railway Station when the Shatabdi Express crossed the above Railway Station. This unnecessarily stoppage time may be utilized by Stopping the Shan-e-Punjab at Karnal Railway Station. Everybody knows that Karnal is a historical and religious place from which thousands of pilgrims used this track to visit the holy places like Amritsar (Golden Temple), Bias (Radha Swami Satsang) and other places daily. If stopped this train at Karnal the Railways get maximum revenue also.

   P.S.:-Both the trains are running for the last 22 years on this track and the speed of these trains are increasing. But the stoppages are same; the railways authorities can recommend more stoppages of above two trains.

3. **Stoppage of Jhelum Express at Gharounda Railway Station Distt. Karnal:** This train has earlier stopped at the above said station now these days again there is no stoppage of Jhelum Express at Gharounda Railway Station which is a mockery to the daily commuters and general public of Karnal Constituency. It is requested that the strictly order should be given to the officials of railways for stoppage of Jhelum Express at Gharounda Railway Station.

4. **Opening of a New Railway Reservation Counter at Karnal Railway Station (extra window):** From starting, I received so many applications and representations by the Senior Citizens, handicapped and ladies of Karnal for the extra window at the Karnal Railway Station to get/reserve tickets easily due to the heavy rush. This window should be strictly reserved for the above citizens as the Railways Board issued some guidelines to upgrade **Karnal Railway Station as a Model Station** with all desirable amenities.

5. **Kachha Phatak at Lord Shiva Gaushala, Shahpur Distt. Panipat at Rohtak-Panipat Line and Kachha Phatak at Village Naultha, at Railway Station side Road Distt. Panipat:** The Gram Panchayats of this area have already submit their resolutions to the Railways authorities and me for making necessary Kachha Phataks due to avoid the serious accidents as the farmers are using this Track with their catties to cross these lines daily.

6. **Provision of L-xing at Azad Nagar and Sanjay Colony (Panipat):** It is a very densely populated area and long pending demands of the inhabitants of these colonies for making L-xing at the above said points as many major accidents had been occurred monthly due to non L-xing at that places after many written complaints to the Railways authorities. The Residents Welfare Association and other organizations and myself submit proposals to the Railways many times and funds had been arranged by the local organizations/ local municipality/ state government earlier, but, there is no action up till now on public grounds.

7. **Introducing of one Garib Rath from New Delhi to Jammu Tawi via Amritsar:** Firstly, I am very thankful to you for introducing the Garib Raths for the people of India. In this continuation, I had already requested the Hon'ble Railways Minister in my previous railways budget speeches for introducing one Garib Rath from New Delhi to Jammu Tawi via Amritsar which covers the northern states of India *i.e.* Delhi, Haryana, Punjab and Jammu Kashmir. The proposed Garib Rath gains the heavy revenue and it is most beneficial for the railways in future also.

8. **Regarding the position of parallel road at Gharonda Station near the railway quarters to the Grain Market, Gharonda Distt. Karnal:** As you explained in written that there is a traffic jam on civil road leading from L-xing No.63 to Gharaunda town to avoid congestion on civil road because on behalf of public had recommending the railways authorities to release the railway land near the railways quarters of this station for developing a alternate road earlier but the same had not examined up till now by the Railways.

   PS: I suggest that the railways can make result oriented proposals to resolve these major problems and any help from State Government in these problems.

9. **Proposed and under proposed Railway flyovers at Gharaunda, Karnal and Trawari Railway Stations:** These are very heavy demands of the public of above said cities. I expect that Northern Railways authorities will make the proposal and submit that proposals to Ministry of Railways/Railways Board for approval.

10. **Introduction of New Passenger Trains and Stoppage of Express Trains and up-gradation of existing stations to Model Stations across NCR (up to 200 Km approx):** Thousands of daily commuters/passengers/general public travel by trains on Delhi-Chandigarh track. Moreover, in view of the Commonwealth Games, these important stations should be upgraded as Model Stations and new trains should be introduced soon. All this will generate a lot of revenue also.

11. **New Railway line from Panipat to Jind via Assandh (Dist. Karnal):** Railway authorities had already conducted a Survey on this important route. However, further work is still awaited.

I hope that you will take these matters on priority basis and re-examine for public welfare. I shall be highly thankful to you.

I am once again thankful to the Premier Railways Minister.*

[Translation]

SH. SHISHUPAL N. PATLE (Bhandara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Thank you very much. I would like to thank Sh. Lalu Prasad Ji for presenting the railway budget. However, I would like to tell him that some injustice has been done to Vidarbha. Earlier I had met Laluji and make him aware of difficulties in my constituency. In the first year he obliged me but in the second year I do not know what made him angry, may be because his party candidate could not win from there. If he works for this area, his candidate may win otherwise his candidate would be defeated by a bigger margin next time. Therefore, I would like to submit to Shri Laluji that I had met GM, Bilaspur three-four times in regard to the problems of my constituency. He had sent a very positive proposal to Ministry of Railways in this regard. The foremost and one of the important problems of my constituency is that the 12 km long railway line between Tirodi and Kantgi which connects Maharashtra with Madhya Pradesh is not functional since Independence. Due to this, poor people of this area have to take a long route of 300 kms. Connecting this 12 km long railway line will not only facilitate the local people but also earn huge revenue to the railways. Another important issue is that we had to launch "Rail Roko" agitation to get the Vidarbha Express extended upto Gondia. However, even after its extension it has not been provided stoppage at Tumsa Road and Tiroda. I request him today to grant approval for stoppages of this train at Tumsa and Tiroda Road.

Sir, Gandwana Express is running there for a long time but does not stop at Tumsa Road. This train should be provided a stoppage there. I also request him that a very old train Gitanjali Express and the other Azad Hind Express from Pune to Kolkata should be provided stoppage at Bhandara. Injustice has been done to Vidarbha. I thank him for the Garibrath introduced between Nagpur and Pune. ... *(interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now and lay the remaining part of your speech on the Table of the House. Nothing will go on record now.

... *(Interruptions)**

[Translation]

DR. DHIRENDRA AGARWAL (Chatra): Sir, I rise to support this railway budget. The hon'ble Minister of

*Not recorded.

[Dr. Dhirendra Agarwal]

Railways has presented a unique budget consecutively for the fifth time. I must say that this budget justifies the sense of this saying "Sarvjan Hitay, Sarvjan Sukhai". I am sure that his name would be written in golden letters in the history of Indian Railways for the magnificent budgets presented by him during the last four years.

Sir, my parliamentary constituency is backward and naxal affected area. There is a proposal to connect Gaya with Chatra Daltonganj with Gaya through railway line. Another proposal is to restart the Chirmire line. My request is that all the tree works should be started immediately so that people of the area could be benefited and you could get the blessings and love of people over there. Besides, the Garib Rath announced in the budget between Banaras and Delhi should run from Gaya to Delhi. Also the Garib Rath which is going to be introduced from Ranchi should run via Daltanganj to facilitate the people of this area also. Alongwith it, I also request that all the express trains passing through my area 'Baravadih' should be given stoppage there. There are some other problems also e.g. there is problem of drinking water in the railway colony. A solution should be found to all those problems. I have given a proposal to construct an overhead bridge at foot over bridge in Barvadih. People of this area would be happy and benefited if action is taken on it. I express my gratitude to him for acceding to the long pending demand of the people of my area. He has obliged me and people of my area. I am very grateful to him.

**PROF. CHANDRA KUMAR (Kangra): Sir, I support the railway budget. I would like to place a few points regarding Himachal Pradesh. The narrowgauge railway line between Pathankot and Joginder Nagar should be converted into broadgauge and it should be extended further upto Kullumanali, Lahaul, Tibbet and China border. A Shatabdi Express should be introduced from Delhi to Pathankot. A booking office should be opened at Pathankot Kangra velly platform.

Sir, Meghrajpur, Nandpur, Kopad, Lahad, Panchrugi railway level crossing should be provided at Valekey Pir railway station on Pathankot-Joginder Nagar railway line.

[English]

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will confine my speech to only one point and that is about railway security. We have got the Railway Protection Force and we have got the Government Railway Police. Since law and order is a State subject, all the crimes committed inside the railway coaches or on the railway stations are dealt with by the GRP, and the RPF's only job is to protect the railway property. As you know, all the unwanted police personnel of the State are sent to the GRP.

Sometimes it is very strangely found that GRP files cases against the RPF personnel. Now, the RPF organisation is being headed by an IPS officer who comes on deputation. The DG, RPF, most of the time, does not have much of expertise on the functioning of the RPF. He somehow enjoys a good time while in the Railways.

My request to the hon. Railway Minister is that he should build up the RPF officers' cadre. The RPF officers are recruited through the Central services and they should not be held up at the DIG's level for seven to eight years. If they are given promotion early, there shall be continuity in the RPF cadre and the RPF cadre will be sustained and these officers, with their vast experience, can lead the RPF.

I will also further request the hon. Prime Minister, through the hon. Railway Minister, that the Constitution should be amended to confer more law and order powers to the RPF personnel because the RPF personnel has got some accountability whereas the GRP has got none. So, this is my point of preference to the hon. Railway Minister.

I have got some small demands, which I shall, with your permission, lay on the Table of the House.

*Through you, I shall request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to implement the following railway projects in my constituency Balasore in Orissa.

(1) Rail under bridge may be constructed at Tamulia Fatak level crossing in between Balasore and Nilagiri Road Station of Kharagpur Division in S.E Railways.

(2) Road Under bridge also may be constructed at the Uttareswar level crossing near the western cabin of the Soro railway station in the KGP Division of S.E Railways.

**Speech was laid on the Table.

... This part of the speech was laid on the Table

(3) A daily Fast passenger train may run in between Baripada-Howrah in the KGP Division of S.E. Rly.

(4) The 203/204 Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar Fast Passenger should run via Cuttack instead of Naraj. This will reduce the running time of the train and it will connect a very important Station like Cuttack which is having the only Medical College of Eastern Orissa.

(5) The goods shed of Balasore railway station in the KGP Division of SE Rly. should be provided with shed cover. The same platform also be concretised so that the goods are not thrown as the mud and dust.

(6) The Puri-Okha Express train should run once a week via Balasore, Kharagpur and Nagpur.*

SHRI LALU PRASAD: Very good.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, the discussion on the Railway Budget is over and the reply by the hon. Railway Minister on Railway Budget will be tomorrow.

The House stands adjourned to meet again tomorrow, the 11th March 2008 at 11 a.m.

23.42 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, March 11, 2008/Phalguna 21, 1929 (Saka).